

Agenda

Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Wednesday, 11 September 2019, 10.00 am
County Hall, Worcester

All County Councillors are invited to attend and participate

This document can be provided in alternative formats such as Large Print, an audio recording or Braille; it can also be emailed as a Microsoft Word attachment. Please contact Democratic Services on telephone number 01905 844963 or by emailing democraticservices@worcestershire.gov.uk

DISCLOSING INTERESTS

There are now 2 types of interests:
'Disclosable pecuniary interests' and **'other disclosable interests'**

WHAT IS A 'DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST' (DPI)?

- Any **employment**, office, trade or vocation carried on for profit or gain
- **Sponsorship** by a 3rd party of your member or election expenses
- Any **contract** for goods, services or works between the Council and you, a firm where you are a partner/director, or company in which you hold shares
- Interests in **land** in Worcestershire (including licence to occupy for a month or longer)
- **Shares** etc (with either a total nominal value above £25,000 or 1% of the total issued share capital) in companies with a place of business or land in Worcestershire.

NB Your DPIs include the interests of your spouse/partner as well as you

WHAT MUST I DO WITH A DPI?

- **Register** it within 28 days and
- **Declare** it where you have a DPI in a matter at a particular meeting
 - you must **not participate** and you **must withdraw**.

NB It is a criminal offence to participate in matters in which you have a DPI

WHAT ABOUT 'OTHER DISCLOSABLE INTERESTS'?

- No need to register them but
- You must **declare** them at a particular meeting where:
 - You/your family/person or body with whom you are associated have a **pecuniary interest** in or **close connection** with the matter under discussion.

WHAT ABOUT MEMBERSHIP OF ANOTHER AUTHORITY OR PUBLIC BODY?

You will not normally even need to declare this as an interest. The only exception is where the conflict of interest is so significant it is seen as likely to prejudice your judgement of the public interest.

DO I HAVE TO WITHDRAW IF I HAVE A DISCLOSABLE INTEREST WHICH ISN'T A DPI?

Not normally. You must withdraw only if it:

- affects your **pecuniary interests** **OR** relates to a **planning or regulatory** matter
- **AND** it is seen as likely to **prejudice your judgement** of the public interest.

DON'T FORGET

- If you have a disclosable interest at a meeting you must **disclose both its existence and nature** – 'as noted/recorded' is insufficient
- **Declarations must relate to specific business** on the agenda
 - General scattergun declarations are not needed and achieve little
- Breaches of most of the **DPI provisions** are now **criminal offences** which may be referred to the police which can on conviction by a court lead to fines up to £5,000 and disqualification up to 5 years
- Formal **dispensation** in respect of interests can be sought in appropriate cases.

**Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel
Wednesday, 11 September 2019, 10.00 am, County Hall,
Worcester**

Membership

Councillors:

Mrs F M Oborski (Chairman), Mrs J A Potter (Vice Chairman), Ms P Agar, Mr T Baker-Price, Mr B Clayton, Ms R L Dent, Mr P M McDonald, Mr S J Mackay and Ms T L Onslow

Co-opted Church Representatives (for education matters)

Bryan Allbut (Church of England)

Parent Governor Representatives (for education matters)

Vacancy

Agenda

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1	Apologies and Welcome	
2	Declaration of Interest and of any Party Whip	
3	Public Participation Members of the public wishing to take part should notify the Head of Legal and Democratic Services in writing or by e-mail indicating the nature and content of their proposed participation no later than 9.00am on the working day before the meeting (in this case 10 September 2019). Enquiries can be made through the telephone number/e-mail address below.	
4	Confirmation of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting (previously circulated)	
5	Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2018-19	1 - 38
6	Ofsted Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services Worcestershire	39 - 58
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Agenda produced and published by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, County Hall, Spetchley Road, Worcester WR5 2NP. To obtain further information or hard copies of this agenda, please contact Alyson Grice 01905 844962/Samantha Morris 01905 844963 email: scrutiny@worcestershire.gov.uk

All the above reports and supporting information can be accessed via the Council's website [here](#)

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CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

11 SEPTEMBER 2019

WORCESTERSHIRE SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2018-19

Summary

1. Derek Benson, Independent Chairman, has been invited to present the Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2018-19 (attached as Appendix 1).

Background

2. The Independent Chairman of the Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB) is responsible for publishing an annual report that provides a public assessment of the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements for children and young people in Worcestershire. The report also recognises achievements and is realistic about the challenges that remain.

3. The report is made publicly available through publication on the Board's website. In addition, it is formally presented to the Chief Executive and Leader of the County Council, to the Health and Well-Being Board and to Cabinet. It is sent to West Mercia's Police and Crime Commissioner, to the respective Chairmen of the Worcestershire Safeguarding Adults Board and the Safer Communities Board, and it is circulated to lead officers in key partner agencies.

4. In September 2018 Derek Benson informed the Panel that Ofsted feedback was evidencing progress by Children's Social Care, albeit there was much work still to be done to reach the point where children in Worcestershire receive a consistently good service. The Board recognised the high level of focus and effort that would be required, with ongoing support from partner agencies, to continue to deliver further improvements.

Key points from the WSCB Annual Report 2018/19

5. During 2018/19 Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board had a particular focus on a number of priorities including:

- Implementation of Neglect Strategy
- Protecting children and young people from exploitation
- Seeking assurance and promoting effective early help
- Voice of the child
- Critical friends to the Children's Social Care Service Improvement Plan (SIP)
- Establishment of new arrangements for the Safeguarding Partnership

- Consolidation of findings from Serious Case Reviews into learning which leads to improved practice

6. The WSCB approved its Neglect Strategy in December 2018. The aims of the Strategy are to develop shared definitions and language, and a consistent approach to screening across the Partnership with examples of appropriate responses at different levels of need. The revised pathway for responding to neglect concerns, spanning early help through to child protection, and a toolkit for use by frontline practitioners in direct work with families are to be launched at targeted events in June 2019.

7. WSCB has a Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Strategic Group as one of its sub-groups and a CSE Operational Group which reports directly to the Strategic Group. During the year the focus on CSE has expanded to include other forms of exploitation and contextual safeguarding. 'GET SAFE' is the Worcestershire partnership title for the identification and management of multi-agency support and protection for children and young people at risk of **G**ang-related activity, **S**exual **E**xploitation, **T**rafficking, Modern day **S**lavery, **A**bsent and Missing, **F**orced Marriage, Honour Based Violence and Female Genital Mutilation, and Criminal **E**xploitation. After some significant delay a CSE Problem Profile was produced by West Mercia Police and this, along with the CSE dataset, now needs to be broadened out to include other areas of the GET SAFE (exploitation) agenda. Towards the end of the year an outline GET SAFE Action Plan was drafted and work is currently being undertaken with Partners to agree the detail.

8. A key development during the year has been the publication of the revised Early Help Pathway identified as a gap in last year's annual report. The Board's Improving Frontline Practice Group was a helpful mechanism for consultation with Partners and it supported circulation of communications through the WSCB newsletter, core training programme and Practitioner Network meetings. It was clarified that co-ordination of delivery of the Early Help Strategy action plan would sit under the Children and Young People Strategic Partnership sub-group of the Health and Well-being Board. Based on audits undertaken during the year it is possible to provide only limited assurance that partner agencies fully understood the threshold for intervention by Children's Social Care and there was found to be significant variation in the quality of referrals being made to the Family Front Door. However, during the year changes were made to referral processes which separated out early help and social work services, with online referral forms providing more guidance for referrers about what is required. It is anticipated that these changes will lead to improved quality of future referrals and support practitioners in distinguishing between the different levels of need.

9. Voice of the Child is one of the practice issues considered in the Board's Multi-Agency Case File Audit (MACFA) process with auditors asked to specifically consider how effectively the 'voice' of the child was sought, recorded and considered by the partner agencies involved. Audits undertaken during the year found that practice is variable in terms of listening to and giving consideration to the views of children and young people. WSCB has adapted a series of prompt questions for practitioners to consider when seeking to understand what a day in the life of a baby, pre-school child, primary age child or teenager looks like. The 'A Day in My Life' prompts form part of the Neglect Toolkit but could be used in all aspects of

direct work with a children or young people. The Board consulted with pupils from middle and secondary schools and feedback informed development of the tools.

10. The WSCB has been updated at every Board meeting on the Service Improvement Plan performance indicators and also on outcomes from Ofsted monitoring visits. Meetings with Critical Friends were discontinued during the year after the Board agreed that progress was being evidenced and Board members were able to provide ongoing scrutiny and challenge through the Board and its sub-groups.

11. The three named Safeguarding Partners (Chief Executive of Worcestershire County Council, Chief Constable of West Mercia Police and Accountable Officer for the Clinical Commissioning Groups) have been represented by their respective Board members in discussions regarding the new multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. A proposal was presented at an exceptional Board meeting on 21 January 2019 followed by a period of consultation. The proposed changes were approved at the Board meeting held on 13 March 2019. There will be a period of transition until the new Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership (WSCP) is fully implemented on 1 September 2019.

12. Work has been completed by the Serious Case Review and the Improving Frontline Practice sub-groups of the Board to develop a summary of key messages from three SCRs completed during the year. A communications plan to ensure dissemination of learning and key messages was developed and presented to the March Board meeting. This communications plan has now been implemented with multi-agency learning events planned for June and July 2019.

13. This year has continued to see further pressure on the Family Front Door with the number of Contacts up by 13% compared with last year. Other increases related to the number of looked after children (up 5.5% compared to last year), the number of open S17 assessments (up 54% compared to last year) and the number of S47 (child protection) assessments (up 14% compared to last year). The number of Plans have reduced this year with Child in Need Plans down by 14.5% and Child Protection Plans down by 2.4%.

14. Three cases were presented during the year for consideration of a Serious Case Review (SCR) but none were found to meet the criteria. Two SRCs which were commissioned last year were completed during the year, however it was evident that one of the cases did not meet the criteria and was subsequently down-graded to a case review with the agreement of the National Panel.

15. During the year 38 Child Death Notifications were received representing an increase of 52% compared with last year. The Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) reviewed 23 deaths during the year and modifiable factors were found to be present in 10 of the deaths. Modifiable factors included lack of parental supervision, maternal smoking and obesity, and fatal road traffic collisions involving inexperienced teenage drivers. National data for 2018/19 is not yet available for comparison purposes. An analysis of 'sudden unexpected unexplained deaths' was undertaken relating to children under 2 years old. It found that there has been a significant rise in baby deaths with modifiable factors which included excessive alcohol consumption coupled with bed sharing and smoking. From September 2019 the process for Child Deaths Reviews becomes the responsibility of the two Child

Death Partners (Local Authority and Clinical Commissioning Groups). In Worcestershire Public Health are taking the lead on behalf of the Local Authority. The decision has been taken to develop a joint CDOP with Herefordshire.

16. The Board delivered core safeguarding training to 842 practitioners during 2018/19. This multi-agency training continued to be rated highly by attendees who report an improvement in knowledge and confidence after attendance. Post-training impact evaluations and audits also demonstrate that learning is transferred into the workplace and has a positive impact on children and families. 996 practitioners completed an e-learning course (down 28% compared to last year). There has been a year-on-year reduction in demand and this year the Board took the decision to cease providing e-learning from April 2019.

17. The Section 11 Audit is a self-assessment by partner agencies of the extent to which they are fulfilling their safeguarding responsibilities as defined in the Children Act 2004. Last year the Board conducted its Section 11 Audit using a new audit template which has been developed by a West Midlands working group. The S11 Audit is to be undertaken every two years. This year the Board can provide assurance that partner agencies continue to report progress is being made against outstanding actions.

18. The annual Section 175/157 Audit (schools and FE colleges) elicited a 100% return rate for the first time, recognised as a tremendous achievement, and provided assurance that there is a high level of safeguarding activity in education settings. Operation Encompass, where schools are informed the next morning about domestic abuse incidents, is welcomed by schools and should have a positive impact on the emotional support made available to children and young people.

Conclusion

19. The Board has concluded that at a strategic level there is a strong commitment to safeguarding children in Worcestershire. It has also received assurances that safeguarding arrangements are in place in partner agencies and that safeguarding responsibilities are taken seriously. In addition, the Board's contributory partners have made maintained the same level of financial contributions despite operating within financial constraints.

20. As last year, much of the Board's attention has focussed on Children's Social Care as lead agency for safeguarding children. The Board has continued to be sighted on the work being undertaken to improve services for children in need of help and protection, including early help, through its comprehensive Service Improvement Plan. In addition, Ofsted have continued to monitor progress through quarterly monitoring visits. As a result of feedback received from Ofsted during the course of the year, which indicated that satisfactory progress was being made, and on the local authority's own Quality Assurance and Performance Information, the Service Improvement Plan has been reviewed and priorities re-focussed. The Board was satisfied with the regular updates provided from the Director of Children, Families and Communities and with commentary and analysis regarding performance information provided by the Assistant Director (Safeguarding). It acknowledges the tremendous effort made on the part of the senior management team to make tangible improvements. Partner agencies continue to have a part to play in ensuring that they also respond robustly to children and families, especially

where the threshold is not met for a Children's Social Care intervention but families require additional support through the provision of early help.

21. This is the final WSCB Annual Report. From 1 September 2019 the Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board will no longer exist, to be replaced by the new Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership. The Board has continued to deliver its statutory functions pending formal handover to the WSCP.

Purpose of the Meeting

22. The Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel is asked to:

- consider the information in the report
- determine whether it would wish to carry out any further scrutiny, and
- agree whether it would wish to make any comments to the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children and Families

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 - Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2018/19

Specific Contact Points for this report

Alyson Grice/Samantha Morris, Overview and Scrutiny Officers 01905 844962/844963
Email: scrutiny@worcestershire.gov.uk

Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Director of Children, Families and Communities) there are no background papers relating to the subject matter of this report.

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**Worcestershire Safeguarding
Children Board
Annual Report 2018/19**

Foreword by Derek Benson, Independent Chair of the Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board

It is my pleasure to introduce the Annual Report for the Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB) for 2018/19. This will be the last such report published by the WSCB under current arrangements before responsibility for local safeguarding transfers to the named Safeguarding Partners in September 2019. Plans for the new arrangements have been carefully considered and the Safeguarding Partners; the Local Authority, West Mercia Police and the Clinical Commissioning Groups for Health, will collectively take the lead in a partnership that remains focussed in its commitment to achieving the best possible outcomes for the children and young people of Worcestershire.

The purpose of Local Safeguarding Children Boards has been to co-ordinate effective safeguarding arrangements across the statutory and voluntary sector agencies, and it is vital that the three Safeguarding Partners maintain that breadth of involvement. They are already actively engaged in partnership activity across the county and are well sighted on the good practice that exists. The strength of the existing arrangements is due to the shared determination of that broad range of partners that come together as the WSCB to ensure children are safeguarded and whose wellbeing is actively promoted. It is essential that the rich diversity of opinion and experience is maintained going forward.

The activity of the Board has been effectively and diligently coordinated and supported by the Business Unit, and I would like to record my appreciation for their ongoing energy, enthusiasm and professionalism.

The Annual Report provides updates on what has been achieved during 2018/19 and includes information on progress against local priorities, developments in safeguarding and how learning has been shared and incorporated into practice. This is achieved through detailed performance data from partners, a comprehensive audit and assurance programme and importantly, feedback and input from service users including children and young people.

Throughout the last year as well as preparing for the transition to the new arrangements, the WSCB has worked to deliver a number of key priorities; implementing a strategy and supporting toolkit to tackle Neglect, better understanding and supporting activity to address the widening issues of exploitation, and seeking assurance and promoting Early Help in Worcestershire. Much of this activity will continue into 2019/20.

Another key element of the Board's work has been the ongoing support for Children's Services in its improvement journey, whilst continuing to monitor the outcomes for children and young people. There are clear signs of progress and this will remain a priority area as the newly constituted Partnership takes shape.

Safeguarding has never been more important and we, as individuals and partners, must remain focussed in our efforts to provide those better outcomes for children and young people in Worcestershire.

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1. Introduction
2. Context
3. Strategic Priorities
4. Effectiveness, Learning and Improvement
5. Formal Summary Statement of the arrangements to ensure that children are safe in Worcestershire

Appendix 1 WSCB Membership

Appendix 2 WSCB Structure

Appendix 3 Financial Position

Appendix 4 Performance Data

Appendix 5 Glossary

1. Introduction

What is the Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB)?

WSCB is the key statutory body overseeing multi-agency child safeguarding arrangements across Worcestershire. Our work is governed by the statutory guidance in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015'.

Section 14 of the Children Act 2004 sets out the statutory objectives of Local Safeguarding Children Boards, which are:

- To co-ordinate what is done by each person or body represented on the Board for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in their area; and
- To ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each such person or body for those purposes.

Purpose of the Annual Report

Statutory legislation requires the Independent Chair of the Safeguarding Board to publish an annual report on the effectiveness of child safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area it covers. This report relates to the preceding financial year. The report will be submitted to the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council, the local Police and Crime Commissioner and the chair of the Health and Well-Being Board.

The report aims to provide a rigorous and transparent assessment of the performance and effectiveness of local services. It identifies areas of weakness, the causes of those weaknesses and the action being taken to address them as well as other proposals for action.

Vision Statement

All children and young people in Worcestershire are safe and thriving

Mission Statement

Working in partnership to keep all children and young people safe and thriving within an environment where safeguarding is everybody's business and intervention and support is timely and right for individuals and families.

WSCB Values

- Respect for children, young people and their families
- Making a positive difference to the lives of children and young people
- Working together in partnership
- Collective and mutual challenge between partners to keep children safe

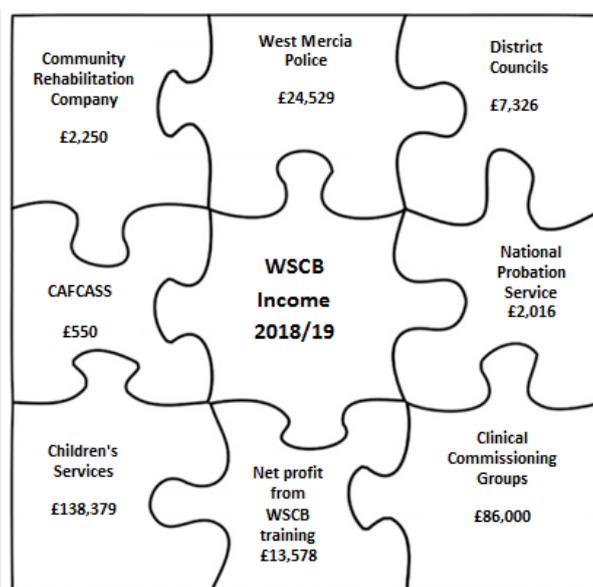
- Involving communities at a local level
- Valuing and responding to diversity

WSCB Membership & Structure

Membership of WSCB is statutory for a number of partners as outlined in [Working Together \(2015\)](#). A full list of member partner agencies can be found at Appendix 1

The WSCB Structure is located at Appendix 2

Financial Contributions



New Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 replaces Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) with new local safeguarding arrangements, led by three safeguarding partners (the local authority, police, and clinical commissioning groups). LSCBs must continue to carry out all of their statutory functions, until the point at which safeguarding partner arrangements begin to operate in a local area. The Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership will be implemented by 1 September 2019. More information can be found at:

<https://www.safeguardingworcestershire.org.uk/changes-to-safeguarding-children-arrangements-from-1st-september/>

2. Context

2.1 Context & Local Demographics

The largely rural county of Worcestershire is situated in the West Midlands. It has a population of 588,400 and 75% of residents live within the main towns and urban areas. According to figures released by Worcestershire County Council the county population has been increasing by an average of approximately 3,800 people per annum over the last 5 years, and the rate of growth is increasing.

Age

Worcestershire has a resident population of approximately 116,900 children and young people aged 0 to 17, making up 20% of the total population. Over the next ten years trend-based projections suggest that the population of 0 to 17 year olds will increase by 4,900 (4.2%) with variations between age groups. The population of 10 to 15 year olds is projected to increase by over 10% while the population of 16 to 17 year olds is projected to increase almost 14%.

Ethnicity

10% of the population aged 0 to 17 is classified as belonging to an ethnic group other than White British. The largest group is Asian or Asian British and the next largest is children from a mixed heritage background. English is spoken as an additional language by over 6,400 school pupils (8.0%). Polish, Urdu and Punjabi are the most commonly recorded spoken community languages in the area.

Areas of Deprivation

The Indices of Deprivation use several measures including income, employment, education, health, barriers to housing and services, crime, and living environment. These are weighted and combined to create an overall Index of Multiple Deprivation. In Worcestershire deprivation scores vary with the highest score at 75.6 in one area of Worcester City and 2.4 in another. Most of the high deprivation areas are in the urban areas of Worcester, Wyre Forest and Redditch, with some areas of deprivation also present in the towns of Evesham, Malvern, Droitwich and Stourport - On - Severn. The average for the county is 17.7, ranked as 111 out of 152 Local Authority areas (1 being the most deprived).

Local Authority Provision

At the end of March 2018 there were a total of 695 Children in Need (CIN), 798 Looked After Children (LAC) and 415 children with Child Protection Plans. (2017 comparison figures in table below.)

Local Authority Provision	March 2018	March 2019
Child in Need Plans (A Child in Need is one that has been assessed under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 as being unlikely to maintain a reasonable level of health or development or whose health or development is likely to be impaired without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled)	695	594

Looked After Children (a child who is being looked after by the Local Authority is known as a child in care)	798	842
Child Protection Plans (children require a Child Protection Plan if they are judged to be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm)	415	404

2.2 Partnership Working

Linkages with other Strategic Boards

The WSCB Independent Chair is directly accountable to the Chief Executive of Worcestershire County Council and works closely with the Director of Children, Families and Communities, attending the Children & Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel when available.

The work of the WSCB fits within the wider context of the Worcestershire Health and Well-Being Board (HWB), the Safer Communities Board (SCB) and the Worcestershire Safeguarding Adults Board (WSAB). Work with WSAB, facilitated by the Independent Chair, focusses on areas of safeguarding which span both Boards in order to improve communication and reduce complexity for partner agencies. Examples are sexual exploitation, domestic abuse and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).

The Board also works closely with the Worcestershire Forum Against Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence with regard to the impact of domestic abuse on children.

Links to other strategies

Special Educational Needs and/or a Disability (SEND) Strategy which sets out partnership duties and will be delivered through an action plan to be overseen by the local authority's Children with SEND Improvement Board.

www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20541/we_are_listening/1616/our_send_strategy

Children and Young People's Plan 2017-21 which provides a framework for all agencies and organisations working with children, young people and families to make the necessary impact to improve lives. www.worcestershire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/8306/worcestershire_children_and_young_peoples_plan_booklet.pdf

www.worcestershire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/8306/worcestershire_children_and_young_peoples_plan_booklet.pdf

Joint Health and Well-Being Strategy 2016 – 21 which is a statement of the Health and Well-Being Board's vision and priorities based on the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and the views of key stakeholders.

www.worcestershire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/7051/joint_health_and_well-being_strategy_2016_to_2021.pdf

Early Help Strategy 2017 – 2020 which sets out how agencies should work together to provide additional support to children and families.

www.worcestershire.gov.uk/downloads/file/8802/worcestershire_early_help_strategy_2017_to_2020

3. Strategic Priorities

3.1 Implementation of Neglect Strategy

Worcestershire has a significantly higher rate of neglect per 10,000 population (34.00 in 2017) than for both statistical neighbours (21.6) and England (26.3). 79% of all current Child Protection Plans are for Neglect which is significantly higher than the national average. Nearly three quarters of new Contacts or Referrals where neglect is a factor relate to children under 10 years old. More than half of all social work assessments result in no further action being taken by Children's Social Care, with one quarter proceeding to a Child in Need or Child Protection Plan.

Three Multi-Agency Case File Audits (MACFAs) have been undertaken on cases where children were experiencing neglect in 2014 (MACFA 14), 2017 (MACFA 26) and 2019 (MACFA 31). The findings from the most recent audit will serve as a benchmark against which the safeguarding partners will be able to evaluate progress.

Key aspects of practice which have been identified from the MACFAs and also from case reviews undertaken nationally are:

- Need to include the parents' histories and parental risk factors as part of the assessment of their ability to change
- Evidence required that inter-agency neglect guidance is being followed by agencies
- Over-focus on the needs of the parents
- Need to listen to children and young people about their lived experience and evidence how this has impacted on decision making
- Need for increased focus on the roles of 'invisible males'
- Need to avoid drift and delay in decision making
- Tendency towards 'start again syndrome' following changes of worker/service
- Importance of chronologies and processes for sharing them between agencies
- Importance of engaging with wider family members when assessing and working with parents who not demonstrating the necessary changes
- Tendency towards professional over-optimism about co-operation and the ability of some parents to sustain improvements
- Need for SMART objectives in Plans with time scales and contingency plans evidenced

The WSCB approved its Neglect Strategy in December 2018 which can be located at: <https://www.safeguardingworcestershire.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Worcestershire-Neglect-Strategy-2018-2020.pdf>

The aims of the Strategy are to develop shared definitions and language, and a consistent approach to screening across the Partnership with examples of appropriate responses at different levels of need. The revised pathway for responding to neglect concerns, spanning early help through to child protection, and a toolkit for use by frontline practitioners when working directly with families are to be launched at targeted events in June 2019. Young people and practitioners had been consulted on some of the tools and their feedback used to improve the tools. Attendees at the launch events will be specifically nominated by their strategic leads to support the embedding of the pathway and toolkit within their own workforce. The toolkit can be located at: <http://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/local-content/xkjN/neglect-tools-and-pathways/?b=Worcestershire>

The Board agreed that neglect would continue to be a strategic priority into 2019/20 so that the impact of the Neglect Strategy could be evaluated.

3.2 Protecting Children and Young People from Exploitation

WSCB has a Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Strategic Group as one of its sub-groups and a CSE Operational Group which reports directly to the Strategic Group. During the year the focus on CSE has expanded to include other forms of exploitation and contextual safeguarding. 'GET SAFE' is the Worcestershire partnership title for the identification and management of multi-agency support and protection for children and young people at risk of **G**ang-related activity, **S**exual **E**xploitation, **T**rafficking, **M**odern day **S**lavery, **A**bsent and **M**issing, **F**orced Marriage, **H**onour Based Violence and **F**emale Genital Mutilation, and **C**riminal **E**xploitation.

These extra-familial forms of abuse and harm require a timely, well co-ordinated, multi-agency response, including information sharing, to ensure risks are quickly identified and responded to at both an early help and high-risk level of need. The GET SAFE Triage being developed at the Worcestershire Safeguarding Hub will play a key role in ensuring these activities are happening across the different levels of need and evaluating the outcomes to inform future responses. The intelligence this multi-agency Triage will gather will help inform Worcestershire's problem profile of Criminal Exploitation and inform future disruption activities and tactical responses.

After some significant delay a CSE Problem Profile was produced by West Mercia Police and this now needs to be regularly updated and broadened out to include other areas of the GET SAFE (exploitation) agenda.

A CSE multi-agency dataset has been agreed and work continues to populate it with input from Partners. There have been continued challenges in accessing Police data following their change of data system. This dataset needs to be developed to include a wider set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to reflect the GET SAFE agenda.

Towards the end of the year an outline GET SAFE Action Plan was drafted and work is currently being undertaken with Partners to agree the detail.

A MACFA was undertaken during the year looking at partner agencies' use of the CSE Screening Tool. Headline findings were that the tool is in need of review and no longer fit for purpose, it is not being used systematically to screen for risk of CSE but rather when there are already CSE concerns, practice is inconsistent and there is a lack of analysis of risk once indicators have been identified. A review of the CSE screening tool is to be undertaken by the GET SAFE Operational Group.

More information is available at:

<https://www.safeguardingworcestershire.org.uk/wscb/professionals/cse/>

3.3 Seeking Assurance and Promoting Effective Early Help

A key development during the year has been the publication of the revised Early Help Pathway identified as a gap in last year's annual report. The Board's Improving Frontline Practice Group was a helpful mechanism for consultation with Partners and it supported circulation of communications through the WSCB newsletter, core training programme and Practitioner Network meetings.

It was clarified that co-ordination of delivery of the Early Help Strategy action plan would sit under the Children and Young People Strategic Partnership sub-group of the Health and Well-being Board.

WSCB was sighted on audits undertaken during the year which looked at the effectiveness of the Early Intervention Family Support (EIFS) service. The quality of assessments was found to be good and the Signs of Safety strengths-based approach was being embedded. Aspects of practice requiring improvement included reflective practice, management oversight and the inclusion of parents and wider family. Feedback from parents was very positive about their experience.

Assurance was provided to the Board from commissioners for both Public Health and Children's Community Health regarding the respective quality assurance frameworks in place for early help services delivered by Providers.

Two MACFAs were completed during the year looking at early help cases. Some examples of good practice were identified where high levels of intensive support had been provided by Family Support Workers. There were questions raised in two of the cases about whether early help at Level 3 was the correct level of intervention given the complexity of needs and risks being presented at the time. There was evidence of good recording of the child's voice in records and in the work undertaken in four of the six cases, and the quality of Plans had improved on the findings from previous MACFAs with Lead Professionals identified in all of the cases (May 2019).

A MACFA undertaken in September 2018 looked at the application of thresholds by partner agencies and the quality of referrals made to the Family Front Door (FFD). Nineteen referrals from a range of agencies were reviewed in detail. It is possible to provide only limited assurance based on the findings that partner agencies fully understood the threshold for intervention by Children's Social Care and there was found to be significant variation in the quality of referrals being made. Responses from staff at the FFD were of consistently good quality, with improvement only required regarding informing referrers of outcomes. During the year changes were made to referral processes which separated out referrals for early help and social work services, with online referral forms providing more guidance for referrers about what is required. It is anticipated that these changes will lead to improved quality of future referrals and support practitioners in distinguishing between the different levels of need.

The Board sought feedback from practitioners on their understanding of early help using a snap survey. The majority of respondents were schools representing one fifth of all education establishments in Worcestershire. The vast majority of respondents said they were at least 'fairly' confident in working in a multi-agency context and confirmed that they accessed the Levels of Need Guidance and found it useful. Most indicated that specific training on being a Lead Professional and completion of an Early Help Assessment would be helpful.

It is not possible for the Board to provide assurance about the wider early help offer made by universal services due to the fact that there is no mechanism in place currently to capture this information.

3.4 Voice of the Child

Voice of the Child is one of the practice issues considered in the Board's MACFA process with auditors asked to specifically consider how effectively the 'voice' of the child was sought, recorded and considered by the partner agencies involved. Across the four MACFAs completed during the year it was found that practice is variable in terms of listening to and giving consideration to the views of children and young people. In the most effective cases the child's voice and lived experience had been explored by practitioners, including

the impact on them of parental needs or vulnerabilities and risk factors, and then used to inform planning.

During the year WSCB adapted a series of prompt questions for practitioners to consider when seeking to understand what a day in the life of a baby, pre-school child, primary age child or teenager looks like. The 'A Day in My Life' prompts form part of the Neglect Toolkit but could be used in all aspects of direct work with a children or young people. The Board consulted with pupils from middle and secondary schools and feedback informed development of the tools.

An example of the prompt questions is located at:

[http://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/assets/clients/6/Worcestershire%20Downloads/Worcestershire%20neglect%20tools/A%20Day%20in%20My%20Life%20\(teenager\).pdf](http://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/assets/clients/6/Worcestershire%20Downloads/Worcestershire%20neglect%20tools/A%20Day%20in%20My%20Life%20(teenager).pdf)

3.5 Critical Friends to the Children's Social Care Service Improvement Plan (SIP)

The WSCB has been updated at every Board meeting on the Service Improvement Plan performance indicators and also on outcomes from Ofsted monitoring visits. Meetings with Critical Friends were discontinued during the year after the Board agreed that progress was being evidenced and Board members were able to provide ongoing scrutiny and challenge through the Board and its sub-groups.

Feedback following Ofsted monitoring visits noted that the quality of support offered to children in care and care leavers has improved since the last inspection of children's services in November 2016, whilst acknowledging that many of the positive changes were at that time (April 2018) very recent and not all children and young people in Worcestershire were yet receiving consistently appropriate support. It was noted by inspectors that the local authority was making satisfactory progress to improve services with good progress being made in the area of assessment and quality assurance. Progress in other areas at that time (July 2018), such as planning for children, was more variable and required further focused work. Inspectors also noted that there had been progress in improving services for children and young people vulnerable to child sexual exploitation and those who go missing, although it was considered that Worcestershire's strategic approach to other forms of exploitation was at that time (January 2019) under-developed.

Last year WSCB noted the significance of the development of a new operating model for children's social care and implementation of the Signs of Safety approach to practice. This year has seen the embedding of Signs of Safety across the partnership and the Board has ensured that tools developed to support aspects of practice, such as the Neglect Toolkit, reflect this approach. In addition, work has continued towards the launch of Worcestershire Children First, the Alternative Delivery Model for Children's Social Care to be launched on 1 October 2019.

3.6 Establish new arrangements for the Safeguarding Partnership

The three named Safeguarding Partners (Chief Executive of Worcestershire County Council, Chief Constable of West Mercia Police, and Accountable Officer for the Clinical Commissioning Groups) have been represented by their respective Board members in discussions regarding the new multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. A proposal was presented at an exceptional Board meeting on 21 January 2019 followed by a period of

consultation. The proposed changes were approved at the Board meeting held on 13 March 2019. There will be a period of transition until the new Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership (WSCP) is fully implemented on 1 September 2019.

Further information is available at: <https://www.safeguardingworcestershire.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Worcestershire-Safeguarding-Children-Partnership-Plan-FINAL.pdf>

3.7 Consolidate findings from Serious Case Reviews (SCRs) into learning which leads to improved practice

Work has been completed by the Serious Case Review and the Improving Frontline Practice sub-groups of the Board to develop a summary of key messages from three SCRs completed during the year. A communications plan to ensure dissemination of learning and key messages was presented to the March Board meeting and has now been implemented.

The Board commissioned the Geese Theatre Company to develop a dramatic piece to be performed for frontline practitioners at a local theatre in June 2019. Three key messages were portrayed in the dramatic scripting around the lives of two fictitious families: any amount of alcohol can impact negatively on parenting, professional dynamics can make it hard for your voice to be heard, and the importance of understanding the child's lived experience and not to assume that a quiet or withdrawn child has nothing to say. Other key messages from the SCRs were summarised in a briefing to be made available to practitioners on the day.

In addition to the Geese Theatre Company production two targeted learning events were planned for July 2019 aimed at frontline practitioners and managers who were placed well professionally to support the embedding of learning across their organisation's workforce. The purpose is to consider what actions frontline practitioners and managers can take to share the learning with staff and to ensure that systems and processes support the improvement of practice in these specific areas of practice.

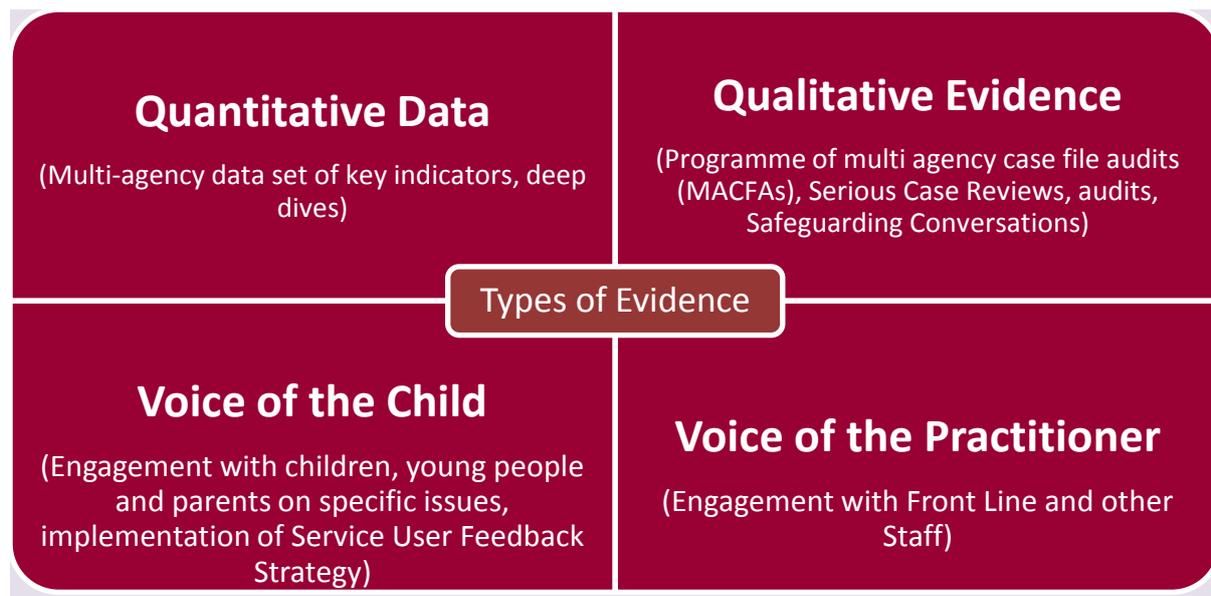
The Learning and Improvement Briefings which support the communications plan are located at: <https://www.safeguardingworcestershire.org.uk/learning-development/training-c/learning-improvement-briefings/>

The Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership will monitor the impact of the embedding of learning over time through audits and data analysis.

4. Effectiveness, Learning and Improvement

4.1 Monitoring Effectiveness

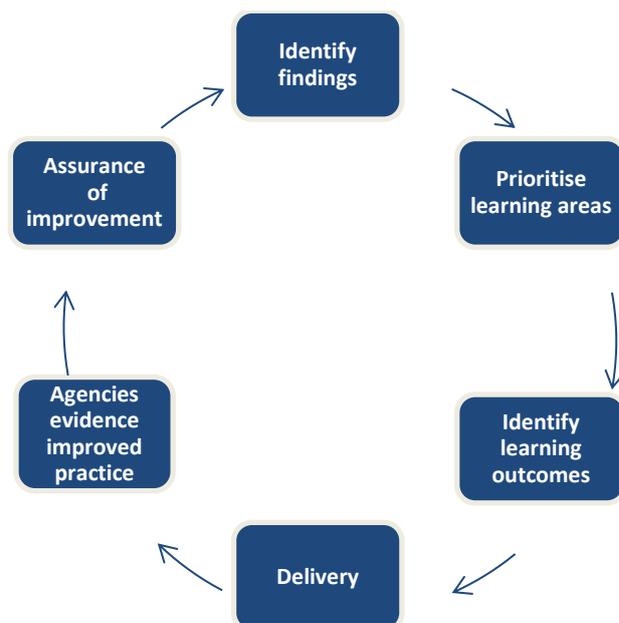
The WSCB evidence base for monitoring the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements in Worcestershire for children and young people during this period has included a combination of:



The WSCB Learning and Improvement Framework consolidates learning from a range of activities including:

- Child Death Reviews
- Serious Case Reviews and case reviews
- Multi Agency Case File Audits (MACFAs)
- Audits
- Safeguarding Conversations
- Domestic Homicide Reviews and Safeguarding Adults Reviews (where appropriate)

The diagram below demonstrates the Learning and Improvement cycle:



4.2 Quantitative Data

The Board maintains a multi-agency dataset of high level key performance indicators which it scrutinises to identify areas of performance which require further interrogation. This year the data has been streamlined to ensure full scrutiny.

Key headlines from the data are:

- 11,300 Contacts to the Family Front Door, an increase of 13% compared to last year
- Number of Looked After Children has increased from 798 last year to 842
- Number of open Section 17 assessments has increased from 386 to 597
- Number of Section 17 assessments completed has reduced from 4953 last year to 4429
- Number of open Section 47 (child protection) assessments has increased from 90 to 103
- Number of open Child in Need Plans has reduced from 695 last year to 594
- Number of open Child Protection Plans has reduced from 415 last year to 404

4.3 Qualitative Assurance Activity

In 2018/19 the following quality assurance audits were completed:



4.3.1 Section 11 Audit (statutory partners)

The Section 11 (S11) Audit is a self-assessment by partner agencies of the extent to which they are fulfilling their safeguarding responsibilities. The S11 Audit provides assurance that safeguarding arrangements are in place across the WSCB partnership or, where improvements are required, plans are in place to address them. WSCB conducts a full S11 audit every two years. In 2017/18 the Board utilised a new audit template devised by a working party from across the West Midlands.

This year the Board can provide assurance that partner agencies continue to report progress against outstanding actions.

4.3.2 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Self-Assessment

Partner agencies were asked to assess themselves against the standards established by the Board. This audit enabled WSCB to benchmark compliance by agencies in this area and compare the results to an audit undertaken in 2017. Improvement has been shown in that no agencies now deem themselves to be inadequate in any area, however there are still areas for improvement reflected in the recommendations.

4.3.3 Section 175/157 audit (schools and colleges)

Response to this annual audit was excellent with 100% of establishments returning their audits. This is the first time that this has been achieved in Worcestershire and demonstrates strong engagement with safeguarding by schools.

This audit evidences a high level of safeguarding activity across education settings in Worcestershire and the importance of a whole school approach which includes a focus on staff development and learning opportunities. 47 Schools have been supported with the self-assessment by the County Council's Education Safeguarding Adviser

Communication between WCC and schools has improved with the provision of network meetings, training and designated Safeguarding Champions.

It is expected that [Operation Encompass](#), where schools are informed the next morning about domestic abuse incidents, is welcomed and should have a positive impact on the emotional support made available to children and young people.

4.3.4 Multi-Agency Case File Audits (MACFAs)

MACFAs are in-depth audits of a small sample of cases facilitated by an independent Auditor commissioned by the Board. Four MACFAs were undertaken during the year and the learning is covered elsewhere in this report. Any child protection issues identified by the review process are immediately picked up by the relevant agency and actioned. Learning is taken back to individual agencies to inform practice and is also included in multi-agency core safeguarding training delivered by the Board.

The MACFA panel invited individual schools to participate in the process where appropriate and this has enabled better understanding of the child's lived experience for all partner agencies.

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4.3.5 Safeguarding Conversations

Safeguarding Conversations are a process developed by WSCB where Board members meet with frontline practitioners to discuss how performance and practice issues impact upon the delivery of a multi-agency plan and subsequent outcomes for a child or young person. Two Safeguarding Conversations were held during the year and three Board members attended including the Director of Children, Families and Communities, the Vice Chair of the Safeguarding Board and the Designated Doctor.

The Safeguarding Conversations were based on Neglect and Step-up/Step-down processes in line with WSCB priorities. In both cases there was found to be evidence of good joint working between agencies. Other aspects of good practice included the collation of full family histories, good quality supervision for staff, evidence of early help support offered by school and health professionals and a contingency plan in place to respond to fluctuating parental mental health. There was evidence of confusion, however, amongst practitioners about how to access early help provision, a lack of information in one case about a parent's new partner and general concern about the lack of availability of suitable mental health services.

4.4 Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP)

The Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) has a statutory responsibility to collect and analyse information about the deaths of all children who live in Worcestershire to identify any safety and welfare matters along with wider public health or safety concerns. The Panel analyses the collated information to classify each death, identify any 'modifiable factors' that may have contributed to the death of the child and make recommendations regarding interventions to reduce the risk of similar deaths. Although there may only be a small number of deaths from a particular cause in a given year, cumulative data and liaison with other CDOPs in the West Midlands may reveal trends and common factors.

During 2017/18 CDOP received Notification of 25 Child Deaths, the lowest since CDOP processes began in 2008. However, during 2018/19, 38 Notifications were received which is closer to the norm over the last 11 years.

CDOP and its Sub-Groups met on 7 occasions and undertook 23 Child Death Reviews during the year. Modifiable Factors were present in 10 of the deaths and included lack of parental supervision, maternal smoking and obesity, and fatal road traffic collisions involving inexperienced teenage drivers.

Other issues coming to Panel included several incidents relating to health care, questions relating to teenage suicide along with the review by Public Health of Infant Mortality in Worcestershire. This found no statistically significant change over a 10yr period [2006 to 2016]

A thorough analysis of Child Death Reviews categorised as 'Sudden Unexpected Unexplained Death' relating to children aged under 2 years was undertaken. It is concerning to learn that there has been a significant rise in Baby Deaths with Modifiable Factors including excessive alcohol consumption coupled with bed-sharing and smoking. This trend has been shared within the West Midlands CDOP Network and wider data analysis is underway including review of the current Safer Sleeping initiatives

The Panel Manager has continued to participate extensively in the plans for the implementation of the 'New Arrangements for Child Death Review' and presented suggested minor modifications to current local operational practices to the September and December Worcestershire CDOP meetings. It is good to reflect that many of the proposed National Changes to the Child Death Review processes have been the culture in Worcestershire for many years.

Considerable attention has also had to be paid to managing the backlog of Child Death Notifications received, especially those managed through the new Perinatal Mortality Review process; to ensure that Child Death Reviews are completed as promptly as post-death processes permit.

From September 2019 Child Death Reviews become the responsibility of the Child Death Partners (Local Authority and Clinical Commissioning Groups) and Public Health is taking the lead for Worcestershire County Council. The decision has been taken to develop a joint CDOP with Herefordshire. Further information is available at:

http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/downloads/file/11281/child_death_review_plan

4.5 Serious Case Reviews (SCRs) and Case Reviews

The Serious Case Review Group considers cases where there may be multi-agency learning to decide whether the criteria for a SCR are met. During the year three cases were considered and, following scoping, were not considered to meet the criteria for a Serious Case Review. If the criteria for a SCR are not met, consideration is given to conducting a case review. No case reviews were initiated during the year.

Two Serious Case Reviews were completed during the year, however it was evident that one of the cases did not meet the criteria and was subsequently down-graded to a case review with the agreement of the National Panel. Learning will be published when parallel processes, such as inquests, criminal proceedings or other formal review processes, have been completed. Recommendations for agencies and the Board have been implemented prior to publication.

Working Together 2018 details how SCRs should be undertaken once the new multi-agency safeguarding arrangements are in place. Under the new legislation and supporting guidance,

these will in future be called 'Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews', with Serious Case Reviews being undertaken by the National Panel if the case is of particular national interest or is complex.

Worcestershire has actively participated in a West Midlands 'Early Adopter' programme to develop a regional framework for Rapid Reviews (scoping process to make a decision about further action) and Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews.

Two Rapid Reviews have been undertaken since the implementation of the new Rapid Review process in June 2018, both achieved within the prescribed time scale of 15 days.

4.6 Single Agency Inspections

Agencies reported that the following inspections had taken place during 2018/19:

- Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust – [CQC Inspection, January, 2019](#) and a NHSI peer review visit undertaken on 11th March, 2019. Progress on the implementation of actions and sustained improvements required following the CQC visits are monitored through the Trust's monthly Safeguarding Committee attended by the Head of Safeguarding or their Deputy. Developments undertaken over 2018/19 period has moved WHAT from a position of offering limited assurance, to that of being able to offer the Trust Board and the CCGs moderate assurance in relation to the safeguarding agenda.
- West Mercia Police were part of a peer inspection at the beginning of 2019 undertaken by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS). The inspection looked at elements of vulnerability and safeguarding and engaged with operational and strategic staff and partners.
- Swanswell, a sub group of Cranstoun who deliver drug and alcohol services, received a [CQC inspection](#) at their base in Worcestershire.
- Children's Social Care had several Ofsted monitoring visits which are all available on the [Ofsted website](#).
- Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue services had an [inspection in 2018](#). The inspection assessed how effectively and efficiently Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service prevents, protects the public against and responds to fires and other emergencies. It also assesses how well it looks after the people who work for the service.
- The local area SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) inspection was completed in March 2018 <https://files.api.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/2773973> The WSCB has been sighted on the written Statement of Action which was developed following the inspection and has received assurance that work streams are progressing. Ofsted continues to monitor implementation of the Statement of Action.

4.7 Communications

During 2018/19 WSCB has engaged in a wide range of communication activities to raise awareness of safeguarding issues and raise the profile of the Board. Communications have been directed towards members of the public, parents and carers, children and young people, and practitioners from across the partnership.

- **Website**

One of the major communications projects has been the development of a new Safeguarding Worcestershire website. A joint project with Worcestershire Safeguarding Adults Board, the website replaced the previous WSCB webpages hosted by Worcestershire County Council. The joint website will provide an opportunity to showcase cross cutting issues such as Transition, Domestic Abuse, Mental Capacity Act and Exploitation, as well as supporting the 'Think Family' approach. It is due to go live on 1st May 2019.

Other communication activities in 2018/19:

- **Newsletter:** four issues of the Board newsletter, Safeguarding Matters, have been published on the board website and circulated across the partnership.
- **Practitioner Network:** the network provides a quarterly forum for local practitioners from across the partnership to meet and share information and best practice in relation to safeguarding issues. The network acts as a consultation and reference group to support the Board.
- **Awareness Days:** The Board has widely circulated briefings and materials to support national awareness days on issues such as Child Sexual Exploitation and Internet Safety.
- **Learning & Improvement Briefings (LIBs):** During the year the board published two further LIBs on MACFA Messages and Consent & Confidentiality. A further four LIBs have been developed for circulation in the spring of 2019 covering key messages from local Serious Case Reviews.

4.8 Engagement with front line practitioners

Practitioner Network

The WSCB Practitioner Network is the interface between safeguarding practice and safeguarding strategy. The network provides the Board with a practitioner's view of the reality of safeguarding children and young people in Worcestershire. Practitioners meet quarterly and represent a wide variety of organisations involved with safeguarding. The network is a dynamic process, not only serving to promote best practice, but also as a conduit to convey views and concerns back to the Board.

This forum is used to disseminate learning and to take feedback from practitioners on a range of specific issues. In 2017/18 the Practitioner Network was consulted on Learning and Improvement Briefings, Levels of Need Guidance and an Early Help survey.

Specific presentations were made to the Practitioner Network on:

- Worcestershire Children First
- Illegal money lending and the impact on safeguarding children and young people
- Signs of Safety
- Domestic Abuse
- Working Together 2018
- [Car Wash App](#) – The Clewer initiative in relation to modern slavery
- Operation Encompass
- Worcestershire Parenting Services
- The impact of contemporary issues on children and young people's mental health

4.9 Engagement with Children, Young People and Families

A social work student from the University of Worcester worked with WSCB during the year to support the Service User Feedback agenda and engagement with young people. She has brought a young person's perspective and challenge to discussions.

This year the Board consulted directly with young people on the development of a toolkit to support the Neglect Strategy. The young people provided excellent feedback and the tools were made more young people friendly as a result.

Agencies are asked to report on their approach to Service User Feedback (SUF) as part of the Section 11 Audit. It is noted that the Youth Justice Service has an excellent method of collating and using feedback from young people to develop its services.

4.10 Policies & Procedures

Worcestershire is part of a consortium of nine Local Safeguarding Children Boards from the West Midlands who share the online multi-agency safeguarding children procedures located at: <http://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/> It is two years since these procedures went live and during this period all of the policies have been reviewed to ensure they are up to date.

In addition, Worcestershire has developed its own pathways and tools which sit in the local section of the procedures. Key pieces of work this year have been the development of a local Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Pathway, Child in Need Guidance and the Neglect Toolkit.

4.11 Evaluating the effectiveness of training

During the year 842 people attended a range of multi-agency courses delivered by WSCB. Courses included Targeted training (1, 2 & Refresher), Supervision training, CSE Awareness Raising and Management of Allegations. WSCB multi-agency training is attended by a wide range of agencies, in particular schools, the Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust and staff who work for the Children, Families & Communities Directorate of Worcestershire County Council.

WSCB multi-agency training continues to be delivered to a very high standard as evidenced by on the day and impact evaluations. 96% of people attending the training completed an 'on the day' evaluation which shows that people rate the quality of the training and effectiveness of the teaching as good or very good. Those who attended said that their knowledge and confidence in working in safeguarding had improved.

Impact evaluations completed three months after the course suggest that attending the training had:

- Improved working practices
- Positively impacted on supporting families and children
- Improved awareness of safeguarding

E-learning was less well used this year with 996 practitioners accessing online courses (down 28% compared with last year). There has been a year-on-year reduction in demand and the Board took the decision cease delivery of e-learning from April 2019. It will instead signpost agencies to alternative providers where they can purchase online courses directly.

5. Formal Summary Statement of the arrangements to ensure that children are safe in Worcestershire

Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board has a responsibility to form an annual overall judgment on safeguarding arrangements and their effectiveness. Based on the Board's quality assurance activity and the learning to come from it, and giving consideration to inspection findings during the year, it can make the following formal summary statement in respect of 2018/19:

Engagement with the work of WSCB has remained strong, evidenced by Board members chairing sub-groups and ensuring actions are completed to implement the Business Plan. Attendance at Board meetings remains good and response to audits is generally positive. There have been fewer changes to Board membership than in previous years which has supported continuity and full engagement. Contributory partners have, despite competing financial demands, maintained funding for the Board. There remains evidence of a strong multi-agency commitment to learning and improvement across the WSCB partnership.

During 2018/19 the Board has continued to be sighted on the work being undertaken by Children's Social Care to improve services for children in need of help and protection, including early help, through its comprehensive Service Improvement Plan. In addition, Ofsted have continued to monitor progress through quarterly monitoring visits. As a result of feedback received from Ofsted and the local authority's own Quality Assurance and Performance Information, the Service Improvement Plan has been reviewed and priorities re-focussed. The Board was satisfied with the regular updates provided from the Director of Children, Families and Communities and with commentary and analysis regarding performance information provided by the Assistant Director (Safeguarding).

Operation Encompass is a national initiative which was launched in Worcestershire in November 2018 where notifications about domestic abuse incidents are communicated the next morning to schools via the portal. The WSCB supported this initiative by providing money to pay for administration capacity for one year. Informal feedback is that schools welcome this information as it places them in a position where they can put a child's presentation into context and provide emotional support to children if necessary.

The Levels of Need (Thresholds) guidance, approved by the Board in March 2016, has been updated during the year to include a revised Early Help Pathway. Previously this had been a significant gap. An understanding of the local early help offer and pathway is critical to ensuring that practitioners are able to make appropriate decisions about how families access timely support and when to make a referral to Children's Social Care. Previously feedback received by the Board indicated that practitioners were unclear about the early help offer and their part in delivering it, and about the process for accessing services for families. Changes to the referral process made in November 2018 for accessing Early Intervention Family Support (EIFS) or Targeted Family Support (TFS) have provided greater clarity for practitioners about the differences between Level 3 and 4 interventions and the process for accessing services when early help support at Level 2 is not sufficient. In December 2018 the Board was informed that early help support requests had nearly doubled with most coming from schools. It is anticipated that the development of locality working in districts will further support the partnership approach. Through its sub-groups the WSCB played a part in

providing feedback on the Early Help Pathway and in disseminating information across the Partnership.

Two key areas of multi-agency activity during the year have been development of the GET SAFE agenda, which has broadened out the focus from Child Sexual Exploitation to other aspects of exploitation, and the Neglect Strategy and launch of the Neglect Toolkit. Next year will see the CSE Strategic and Operational Groups widen their respective remits as exploitation remains a key priority for the new Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership, and the development of a GET SAFE Action Plan 2019-21 will support this important area of multi-agency safeguarding. Evaluation of the impact of the Neglect Toolkit on practice and development of our understanding of neglect in Worcestershire will also be a priority during the coming year.

Summary statement of overall effectiveness

The Board concluded that the body of evidence from data, audits, its own learning and inspection findings demonstrates that clear progress is being made in the provision of support and protection for children and young people in Worcestershire. The anticipated full inspection of local authority services by Ofsted in 2019 will hopefully confirm this position.

Further assurance is required as to the effectiveness of the wider early help offer, albeit it is recognised that the quality of provision by local authority commissioned providers is good. In order for children and families to receive the right services at the right time there needs to be a good understanding of the Early Help Pathway and the threshold for statutory intervention by Children's Social Care. The Board acknowledges the good work done to develop the Worcestershire Early Help Pathway which, along with changes made to referral processes, provides greater clarity for practitioners about their role in delivering lower level early help and about accessing services at higher levels of intervention.

The Board acknowledges the tremendous effort made by the Local Authority, in collaboration with partners, to make tangible improvements to services for children and young people in Worcestershire. It recognises, however, that further work is required for safeguarding services to be consistently good and hands over to the new Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership to provide the support and challenge as the improvement journey continues in 2019/20.

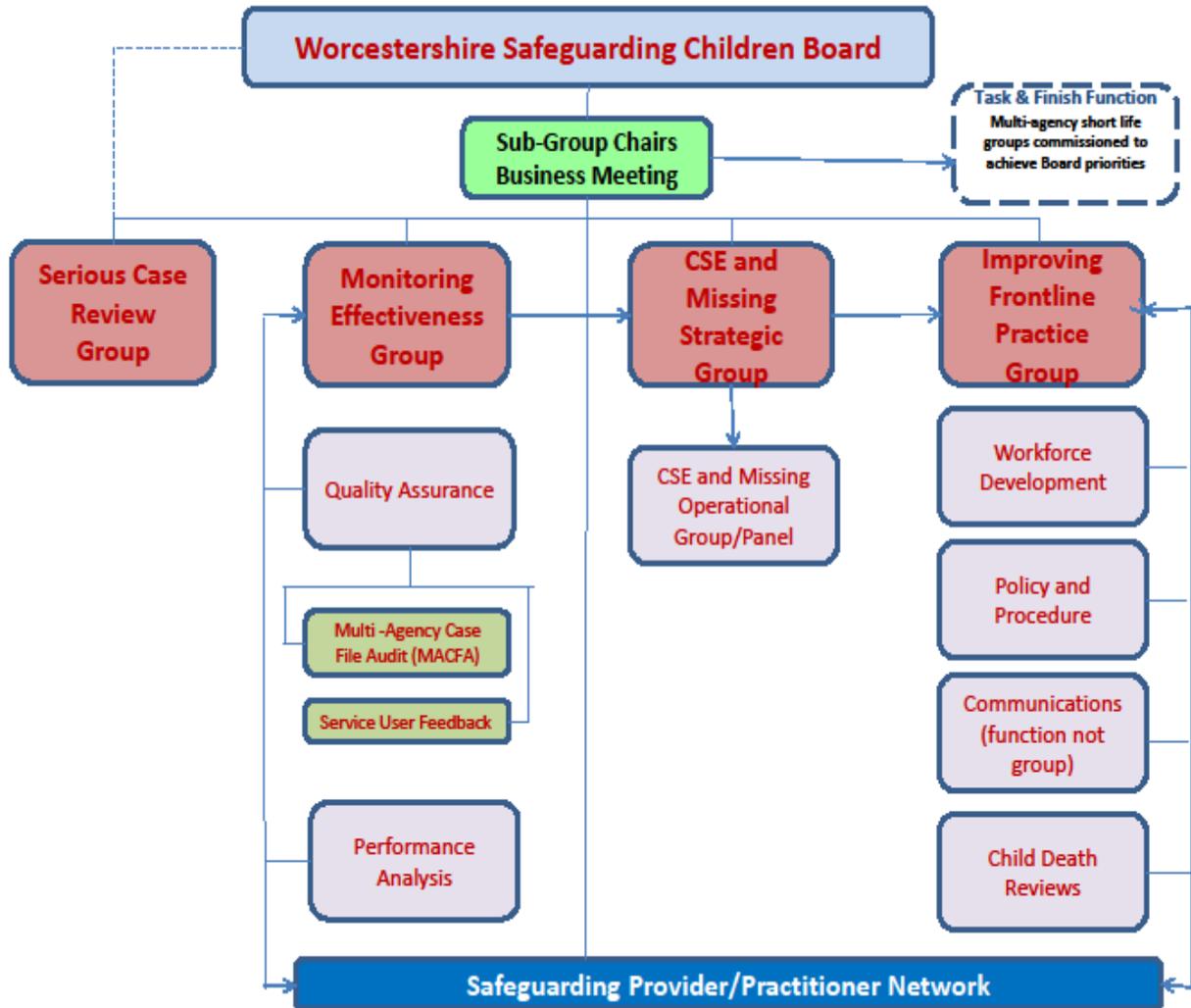
Footnote: Ofsted completed a full inspection of Children Social Care services in June 2019. Inspectors recognised that considerable progress has been made in many areas in improving the quality of services for children and families since the inspection in 2016. The report acknowledges that outcomes for many children and their families are better and that there is evidence of a "sustained trajectory of improvement". Following the inspection the judgement from Ofsted is that all service areas 'require improvement to be good'. In 2016 all areas were judged to be inadequate other than adoption.

Appendix 1 WSCB Membership 2018/19

Agency	Name	Role
Independent	Derek Benson	Independent Chair
Worcestershire County Council	Catherine Driscoll	Chief Executive
	Tina Russell	Assistant Director (Safeguarding)
	Sarah Wilkins	Assistant Director (Early Help and Commissioning)
	Nick Wilson	Assistant Director (Education and Skills)
	Frances Howie	Director of Public Health
	Sarah Cox	Quality and Safeguarding Manager, Adult Social Care
Young Solutions	Michael Hunter	Chief Executive (representing Community Voluntary Sector)
CAFCASS	Julie Shaw	Service Manager
Heart Of Worcestershire FE College	Julia Breakwell	Vice Principal (representing FE Colleges)
Bromsgrove and Redditch District Council	Kevin Dicks	Chief Executive (representing District Councils)
Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust	Michelle Clarke	Director of Quality (Executive Nurse)
NHS Worcestershire Clinical Commissioning Groups	Lisa Levy	Chief Nurse and Director of Quality
	Ellen Footman	Designated Nurse
	David Lewis	Designated Doctor
West Midlands Ambulance NHS Trust	Robert Cole	Head of Clinical Practice
Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	Vicky Morris	Deputy Chief Nursing Officer
Herefordshire and Worcestershire Youth Justice Service	Keith Barham	Head of Service
West Mercia Police	Damian Pettit	Superintendent, South Worcestershire
Warwickshire and West Mercia Community Rehabilitation Company	Nina Kane	Head of Service, Worcestershire and Herefordshire
National Probation Service	Jackie Stevenson	Head of Service, West Mercia

Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service	Nathan Travis	Chief Fire Officer
St Peters C of E First School	Tracey O'Keefe-Pullen	Head Teacher (representing First and Primary Schools)
St Egwins Middle School	Nick Pullen	Head Teacher (representing Middle Schools)
Waseley Hills High School	Alan Roll	Head Teacher (representing Secondary Schools)
King's School	Matthew Armstrong	Head Teacher (representing Independent Schools)
Riversides School	Paul Yeomans	Head Teacher (representing Special Schools)
Magic Moments Nursery	Natalie Burford	Proprietor (representing Early Years)

Appendix 2 WSCB Structure



Updated July 2016

Appendix 3 End of Year Finance Position

	Board Budget	Training Delivery	SCR	Partnership Fund	Total
	Expenditure £				
Salaries **	174,810				174,810
Independent Chair	26,257				26,257
SCRs and Case Reviews			9,235		9,235
Performance resources *	16,842				16,842
Administration and business costs	40,367				40,367
Training Expenditure (excluding salaries)		28,629			28,629
E-Academy (E-learning)		14,016			14,016
Partnership Fund expenditure				29,388	29,388
Total Expenditure	258,267	42,645	9,235	29,388	339,544
	Income £				
Agency Contributions					
WCC - 50%	(138,379)				(138,379)
Health - 35%	(86,000)				(86,000)
Police - 10%	(24,529)				(24,529)
National Probation Service - 0.9%	(2,016)				(2,016)
Community Rehabilitation Company - 0.9%	(2,250)				(2,250)
CAFCASS - 0.4%	(550)				(550)
District councils - 2.5%	(7,326)				(7,326)
Core training, Early Years and GP		(42,410)			(42,410)
Income from E-Learning		(13,813)			(13,813)
Partnership Fund				(0)	(0)
Total income	(261,051)	(56,223)	(0)	(0)	(317,273)
Net Expenditure	(2,774)	(13,578)	9,235	29,388	22,271
Holding account b/f as at 1 April 2018	(18,700)	(88,360)	(27,360)	(39,200)	(173,620)
Holding account as 31 st March 2019	(21,474)	(101,938)	(18,125)	(9,812)	(151,349)

Appendix 4 Performance Data

1. Journey of the Child

1.1 Initial Contact

- There were just over 11,300 contacts to the Family Front Door in the full year, an increase of 10% on last year and an average of 942 per month.
- Percentages of Contacts by source are: Police 43%, Schools 12%, Health 14%, Individual 8%, Local Authority Services 6%, Others 16%.
- Percentages of Contacts by outcome are: Social Care referral 48%, Early Help 26%, No further action 26%.
- Accepted referrals to Children's Social Care services were approximately 430 per month (last year not comparable).
- Repeat referrals within 12 months have decreased slightly to 21% (last year was 22%).
- Open Section 17 assessments have increased to 597 (last year was 386).
- Open Section 47 assessments have increased to 103 (last year was 90).
- Section 17 timeliness improved to 82% (last year was 73%).
- Initial Child Protection Conference timeliness improved to 77% (last year was 74%).

1.2 Early Help

- There have been 1288 Early Help Assessments completed (last year was 1162), with the number open reduced to 113 (last year was 145). There are 533 open Early Help workflows (last year was 436), which equates to 900 individuals with a Targeted Family Support worker (last year was 879).
- Recently there has been a monthly average of 26 step downs from social care (last year was 25) and 7 step ups to social care (last year was 7).

1.3 Children with a Child in Need Plan

- Children with open Child in Need Plans has reduced to 594 (last year was 695).
- Child in Need figures for Worcestershire are in line with our statistical Neighbours in rates per 10,000.

1.4 Children with a Child Protection Plan

- Children with a Child Protection Plan have reduced to 404 (last year was 415).
- Duration of Child Protection Plans have shortened with 88% now shorter than 12 months compared to 65% at the end of March 2018.
- Number of children subject to a Plan for longer than 18 months has increased to 16 (last year was 7).
- The rate of Child Protection Plans per 10,000 has reduced to 35 (last year was 36). Nationally this was 45 for 2018.

1.5 Looked After Children

- Number of Looked After Children has increased to 842 (last year was 798).

- The rate of Looked After Children per 10,000 has increased to 72 (last year was 69). Nationally this was 64 for 2018.

1.6 Children who are Care Leavers

- There are currently 359 care leavers open for services, of whom 87% are classed as 'in touch' with the service (last year was 88% and National 93%), 89% are known to be in suitable accommodation (last year was 89%), care leavers not in suitable accommodation has reduced to 4% (last year was 10%) and those classed as not known is 7%. Work within the Through Care service business plan and with the corporate parenting board is prioritising suitable accommodations.

1.7 Children in Private Fostering

A privately fostered child is defined as a child under the age of 16 (18 if disabled) who is cared for and provided with accommodation by someone other than the parent, a parent who is not the biological parent but has parent responsibility, a close relative such as a brother, sister, aunt, uncle, grandparent or step parent. A child who is looked after in their own home by an adult is not considered to be privately fostered.

- There are 11 private fostering arrangements in place (last year was 15). An average of 77% of fostering visits were within timescale (last year was 66%).

1.8 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children are children who have travelled to the UK alone, or become separated from anyone with parental and/or care responsibilities for them. Children seek asylum because they have a genuine need for protection and are in search of safety. Under sections 17 and 20 of the Children Act 1989 Local Authorities have a duty to provide support to these children.

- 33 children were accepted as UASC during the year, all aged from 13-17 years. The total now placed in Worcestershire is 38 (last year was 24), 27 of which are in foster care and 11 in semi-independent accommodation.

1.9 Children with a disability

The Children with Disabilities Team offer services to those children and young people requiring additional resources in respect of their disability, where the disability has a profound impact on the child or young person's life. Other services available are those provided by health, education, play and youth services as well as community resources provided by voluntary agencies.

- The number of children allocated to the specific disability team increased to 437 (last year was 413), with 271 being subject to a short breaks plan, 51 on a Child in Need Plan, 42 being looked after and 10 on a child protection plan.

1.10 Children Missing Education and Electively Home Educated Children

When a child is on a school roll but not attending and they cannot be traced, the Local Authority must try to find the child. Parents have the right to educate their children at home as long as they provide an education that is sufficient and suitable for their child's needs and aptitudes. There is a requirement on Local Authorities to annually monitor the suitability of education provided to children educated at home. Schools have to inform their Local Authority if a child is removed from roll to be home educated and the guidance has extended this requirement to academies and independent schools.

- The number of children registered as missing education was 57 with 287 under current enquiry.
- The number of children being electively home educated has increased to 742 (last year was 694).
- Both of these continue to be a key focus for Education and Skills.

1.11 Children at risk of offending

The Youth Justice Service aims to prevent offending and re-offending by children and young people under the age of 18 by providing a variety of interventions and support. These can include preventative provisions and diversionary activities, so that young people can have more fulfilling lives, families are strengthened, and communities feel safer and more harmonious.

There has been no information received from West Mercia Police in relation to the number of children charged and detained by the police or those held in police custody overnight for four hours or more.

1.12 Children and Health

The Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) provides support to children and families where the young person is experiencing significant mental health difficulties. The team includes psychiatrists, psychologists, psychotherapists, mental health nurses, family therapists and therapeutic social workers.

- Referrals have increased to 210 per month (last year was 200) for the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service in 2018/19. The numbers on waiting lists for an initial appointment have reduced significantly to below 150 (last year was 318), whilst waiting times have reduced to under 5 weeks (last year was 6 weeks).

1.13 Missing Children

The aim is to reduce the incidence of all children and young people going missing and if they do, to reduce the risk of them suffering harm and recover them to safety as soon as possible. We do this through partnership working, information sharing, problem solving and performance management. A child or young person will be categorised as 'Missing' when their whereabouts cannot be established and/or the circumstances are out of character and the context suggests the person is subject of a crime or at risk of harm to themselves or another.

Introduction of Missing Children Officers in Feb 18 has shown a significantly positive impact on the number of missing children incidents and on the numbers of individual children involved in incidents through 18/19. Timeliness of Welfare Return Interviews has significantly improved since embedding of this new role. There has been a decrease in missing children incidents and children involved in incidents by approximately 50%.

2. WSCB Strategic Priorities

2.1 Children subject to Neglect

- 79% of all Child Protection Plans have neglect as a category (last year was 65%).
- 19% of all Child in Need Plans have neglect as a factor (No comparable figure for last year).
- 36% of all Child Protection Plans have neglect as a factor (No comparable figure for last year).
- 32% of all Looked After Children have neglect as a factor (No comparable figure for last year).

The rise in the number of children subject to plans for neglect is reflective of increasing awareness and proactive action to identify Neglect as a serious issue of harm to children. Informal work was completed with managers in year and the formal WSCB Neglect Strategy and Toolkit was launched towards year end. The reduction in the use of the category of emotional abuse is reflective of work done with chairs and partners to ensure the Child Protection threshold is clear to parents and partners.

2.2 Children witnessing Domestic Abuse

- There was a monthly average of 218 contacts with Domestic Abuse as a factor (No comparable figure for last year).
- There was a monthly average of 127 Section 17 assessments with Domestic Abuse as a factor (No comparable figure for last year).
- 30% of all Child in Need Plans have domestic abuse as a factor (Last year was 35%).
- 45% of all Child Protection Plans have domestic abuse as a factor (Last year was 48%).
- 30% of all Looked After Children have domestic abuse as a factor (Last year was 31%).
- West Mercia Police remain unable to report data in respect to children with repeated domestic abuse offences.

2.3 Children vulnerable to and experiencing Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

- Monthly CSE referrals have increased to 34 (last year was 32).
- The current number experiencing CSE is 12 (last year was 16).
- The current number vulnerable to CSE is 164 (last year was 155).
- 3% of all Child in Need Plans have CSE as a factor (No comparable figure for last year).
- 2% of all Child Protection Plans have CSE as a factor (No comparable figure for last year).
- 3% of all Looked After Children have CSE as a factor (No comparable figure for last year).

Appendix 5 Glossary

CAFCASS	Children and Families Court Advisory and Support Service
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
CCG	Clinical Commissioning Groups
CDOP	Child Death Overview Panel
CiN	Child in Need
CME	Children Missing Education
CPC	Child Protection Conference
CPP	Child Protection Plan
CQC	Care Quality Commission
CRC	Community Rehabilitation Company
CSC	Children's Social Care
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation
EH	Early Help
EHA	Early Help Assessment
EHE	Elective Home Education
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
HACT	Health and Care NHS Trust
HMIC	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary
HWB	Health and Well-Being Board
ICPC	Initial Child Protection Conference
IMD	Index of Multiple Deprivation
LAC	Looked after Child
LGA	Local Government Association
LSOAs	Lower Layer Super Output Area
MACFA	Multi Agency Case File Audit
MEG	Monitoring Effectiveness Group
NPS	National Probation Service
SCR	Serious Case Review
SUDIC	Sudden, Unexpected Deaths in Infants and Children
WCC	Worcestershire County Council
WFADA & SV	Worcestershire Forum Against Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence
WMP	West Midlands Police
WSAB	Worcestershire Safeguarding Adults Board
WSCB	Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board
YABS	Youth Advisory Board (Safeguarding)
YJS	Youth Justice Service

Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board

www.safeguardingworcestershire.org.uk



CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL 11 SEPTEMBER 2019

OFSTED INSPECTION OF LOCAL AUTHORITY CHILDREN'S SERVICES WORCESTERSHIRE

Summary

1. The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children and Families and the Director (Designate) Children's Social Care and Safeguarding have been invited to the meeting to provide an update on the outcome of the Ofsted Safeguarding Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services which took place in June 2019.

Background

2. On 24 January 2017, Ofsted published their report entitled 'Inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers; and Review of the effectiveness of the Local Safeguarding Children Board'.

3. The overall judgement for Worcestershire was 'inadequate'. Following the Ofsted judgement, an eight-point Service Improvement Plan (SIP) was developed by Children, Families and Communities Leadership Team to cover all of the recommendations made by Ofsted.

4. As a result of this judgement, Ofsted put in place a series of Monitoring Visits to track the Council's progress. There have been seven such visits in May 2017, September 2017, January 2018, April 2018, July 2018, October 2018 and January 2019.

Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services Worcestershire

5. The full Ofsted re-inspection of Children's Social Care Services, carried out under the ILACS Framework (Inspections of Local Authority Children's Services), took place between 17 and 28 June 2019 and Ofsted's report was published on 29 July 2019. The full Ofsted report can be accessed [here](#).

6. The report recognises that considerable progress has been made in many areas of the service. It acknowledges that outcomes for many children and their families have improved and there is evidence of a 'sustained trajectory of improvement'. The judgement from Ofsted is that all service areas require improvement to be good. Further details of Ofsted's findings are given in the presentation slides attached as Appendix 1.

Next Steps

7. Following our "Requires Improvement to be Good" judgement it is important we make the cultural shift with staff and partners into our next phase of service delivery. In this phase we will focus on sustaining the progress made thus far, ensuring we

have consistency in our recognised good practice and in continuing to develop and improve services as a “Continuous Learning” service.

8. Our aims and objectives are set out in the Worcestershire Children First Service Business Plan (see Cabinet Papers 5 September 2019 for full plan) and cascaded into directorate and service area based plans. Our plans will take into account the findings of the June 2019 inspection, the key priorities transferring from the previous service improvement plan and each service area will have in place a quality assurance programme to manage and monitor continuous improvement and evidence impact and outcomes for children and families.

9. From 1 October 2019, Worcestershire Children First will be accountable for delivering continuous improvement. The Quality Assurance and Monitoring arrangements for the company are set out in the WCF Business Plan. Our framework will continue to be based on three core principles:

- A continuous focus on service improvement at all levels of the organisation.
- Embed a culture of learning from quality assurance and performance management.
- Know the difference we are making to the lives of Children and Young People.

10. Monitoring of performance and progress will take place through the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). A number of KPIs will be monitored covering all service areas of the Company reflected in the Services Specification including social care, early help and education. These will be monitored monthly, quarterly or annually as set out against each Key Performance Indicator and set out against any future or amended Key Performance Indicators. KPIs will be reviewed jointly by the Council and the Company as part of the Annual Review.

Purpose of the Meeting

11. The Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel is asked to:

- note the information in the report and Appendix 1;
- determine whether it would wish to carry out any further scrutiny; and
- agree whether it would wish to make any comments to the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children and Families

Supporting Information

- Appendix 1 – Presentation Slides Ofsted Inspection of Children’s Services Worcestershire

Contact Points

Specific Contact Points for this report

Alyson Grice/Samantha Morris, Overview and Scrutiny Officers 01905 844962/844963

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Director of Children, Families and Communities) the following background papers relate to the subject matter of this report:

Agendas and minutes of Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 14 August 2017, 24 October 2017, 22 March 2018, 16 May 2018, 14 September 2018, 16 November 2018 and 6 March 2019

[All agendas and minutes are available on the Council's website here.](#)

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Ofsted Inspection of Children's Services Worcestershire

Overview and Scrutiny September 2019

Safeguarding
Inspection of
Local
Authority
Children's
Services
January 2016

There are widespread and serious failures in the services provided to children in Worcestershire who need help and protection and children looked after

Judgement : Overall Inadequate

Placed under direction by secretary of State to form an alternative delivery model for the delivery of children's services

Inspection Local
Authority
Childrens
Services
Worcestershire
July 2019

The local authority has made considerable progress in improving the quality of services to children and families since 2016.

Essential steps have been taken to meet the goals in the service improvement plan.

Senior Leaders and elected members are ambitious for and committed to, ensuring the well being, safety and outcomes for children in the county.

Senior Leaders have successfully created a strengthened workforce of stable and permanent workers who know their children well.

As a result, outcomes for many children and their families are better, the changes are embedded on core practice and there is evidence of a sustained trajectory of improvement.

Judgement

Judgement	Grade
The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families	Requires improvement to be good
The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection	Requires improvement to be good
The experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers	Requires improvement to be good
Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement to be good

Children In Need of Support and Protection

- The Targeted Early Help undertaken with families is making a positive difference to their lives
- Thresholds are applied appropriately and most children receive a proportionate response to need
- Consent is understood - sought and dispensed with appropriately.
- Social work assessments are comprehensive in gathering information and views of the child, parents and partners. They are up to date, completed in a timely and they analysis risk effectively
- Decision making at the FFD is usually prompt and timely, informed decisions, with appropriate contribution of partners, are made where serious safeguarding concerns are identified and safe plans made for children
- Effective partnership working between police and social workers for children vulnerable to exploitation means the response to these concerns is strong and the multi agency in Domestic Abuse triage is effective in safeguarding children

Children In Need of Support and Protection

- Social workers know their children well, they understand what life is like for them and their views are informing assessment outcomes and plans
- Child Protection Conferences and Child In Need meetings are timely and children, families and partners well engaged in them
- Monitoring of outcomes in child protection cases is good. When concerns reduce cases are appropriately “stepped down” enabling the families to maintain progress with support and when concerns escalate swift action is taken to safeguard the children
- Legal advice is usually sought promptly and good use of time limited pre proceedings takes place

Children In Need of Support and Protection

- Work in the disabled children teams demonstrates and understanding of risk and the needs of children they work with.
- Smooth transitions between Children and Adult services, are facilitated by work the between Young Adults and Children with Disability teams
- Across the services Signs of Safety is well embedded and used effectively with professionals and families to identify risk and measure progress
- Emergency duty services provide effective out of hours
- Concerns and allegations about professionals are managed well by the designated officer service
- Arrangement for Privately fostered children are effective

Children In Need of Support and Protection

- Partnership work with police and multi agency information sharing in response to children experiencing exploitation have improved and creation of Missing Children Officers has made a positive impact.
- Social workers understand specialist areas of safeguarding and exploitation. Young People at risk of Radicalisation, Honour Based Violence and Forced Marriage are well supported
- Active responses to the rise in both children missing in education and those Educated at Home is taking place
- LA effectively monitors and provides appropriate support and challenge to Alternative Provisions and is effectively working with schools to reintegrate pupils where this is appropriate

Children in Care and Care Leavers

- Decisions made for children to come into care are appropriate and where necessary immediate action is taken to safeguard children
- Assessments for children in our care are timely, comprehensive and care plans are appropriate and Care plans for are comprehensive, up to date and reflect the needs of children well
- Effective parallel planning for young children ensure they achieve timely permanency
- Majority of children in care are settled, are in placements that meet their needs and are making progress
- Care planning for siblings groups is done in the best interests of children. Siblings are placed together when it is in their interests
- Children in care “benefit” from supervised family time with parents, siblings and family

Children in Care and Care Leavers

- Long term stability for most children has improved as a result of proactive management and service development to introduce “consolidation meetings”
- Looked After Child reviews are well chaired by IRO’s, Records are written in a supportive meaningful way and in most cases IRO’s are active in ensuring quality and timeliness is identified and addressed.
- Children and Young People in care are making good educational progress and this is effectively monitored by social workers and schools through Personal Education Plans
- Assessments of Foster Carers are timely, thorough and analytical.
- Supervising social workers understand the needs of the children and help foster carers to develop their skills necessary to meet those needs.
- Planning for children with a plan of Adoption is a strength. ACE and the local authority work effectively to identify where Adoption is an appropriate permanence plan early and then family find without delay.

Children in Care and Care Leavers

- Personal Advisors build positive relationships with young people and they know them well. They are aspirational for their young people and consistently encourage them to achieve in education and employment
- All care leavers have a PA to the age of 21 and the LA ensure they offer services, and are in contact, with most up to the age of 25 years
- Pathway Plans are detailed, up to date and have clear actions and timescales. Good participation from young people in completing their own plans and our “plan on a page” provide a good straightforward overview
- Access to support across the districts is positive and helps maintain contact and reduce isolation for these young people
- Most Care Leavers live in suitable accommodation and our outreach services engage young people in independent skills course that is effective in increasing confidence and enables them to progress through stages to independent living

The Positive Impact of Leaders on social work practice

- Since Oct 16 the Local Authority has made considerable progress improving the quality of services; essential steps have been taken to meet the goals of the service improvement plan and Corporate Parenting has been strengthened
- The combination of; restructure of services; focused investment and the “end to end” approach of service improvement has ensured changes are embedded in core practice and the trajectory for further improvement is established.
- Quality Assurance system has established a range of performance information that allows senior managers to better understand practice
- Effective work has strengthened the workforce and Staff are positive about working for Worcestershire
 - Stability and permeance in recruitment and retention
 - Career opportunities in the structure
 - Strength based model of intervention
 - Reduced case loads overall
- Good Strategic Partnerships have created conditions for improvement in practice and reputation in the Local Judiciary and has enabled the development of an encompassing “Get Safe”² strategy to address exploitation

Challenges to the Impact of Leaders on social work practice

- A Small number, a Minority, a Few v's Usually, Most, the Majority – We know we need to continue our work to achieve full consistency in high quality services for all children
 - Comprehensive analysis in assessments, Effective use of Chronologies and Family friendly and outcome focused plans are not yet in place all the time for all the children
 - Team Managers and Independent Chairs are not always proactive or effective in identifying and improving quality or timeliness in all cases.
 - Robust case management and timely reflective supervision is not yet in place for all social workers all the time.
- Partnership working in Early Help is not yet sufficiently robust to ensure all partners take active leadership roles in the provision of early help interventions
- Joint Commissioning with health of mental health services has not yet resulted in a clear pathway or priority of intervention for children in care or care leavers
- Accommodation for Care Leavers and those at risk of homelessness is not yet meeting demand and need and there is still reliance on Bed and Breakfast in the absence of anything more suitable being available.
- Support services to prevent care and sufficiency of placement for young people with the most complex needs who do need to enter care are not yet meeting demand and needs

Our commitment to continuous improvement

The engagement with partners to deliver early help to families and to ensure that this help is timely.

The quality of intervention with families where there is a risk that children may be received into care if the right support and guidance is not available AND The timely availability of family support when children have a plan to leave care and return home.

Assessments of need for 16- and 17-year-olds who present as homeless, including whether they should come into the care of the local authority. Young people should be told clearly about this option.

Learning from the breakdown of placements for children by the holding of timely disruption meetings.

Evidencing Early Help taking place by partners. Strategic conversation with partners about level of need, roles and responsibilities – how do we structure and deliver support to ensure the right families receive early help when they need it.

Implementation of our multi agency Supporting Families First (Edge of Care) that will enable us to support even more children and young people to stay or return safely to their family

Improvement of the quality of social work practice assessment and planning along with a review of the effectiveness of joint working with partners supporting this group of young people especially at times of crisis

Build on our “consolidation meetings” preventing breakdown and enhance our service learning through reviews post breakdown “disruption meeting”

Our commitment to continuous improvement

The availability of a dedicated pathway to the provision of mental health services for children in care.

Engage with partners in health to improve the way in which we assess needs of our most vulnerable children and young people and prioritise them to ensure we provide timely direct work to promote their emotional health and wellbeing

The provision of personal assistants for care leavers when they reach the age of 17.

In our Through Care services review how we can provide support and guidance to promote a young persons independence and transition to adulthood at the earliest opportunity.

The availability of suitable accommodation and timely interventions that ensure that care leavers, including those aged over 18 years, are not placed in bed and breakfast accommodation or become homeless.

Work with our Districts, Housing Providers and Partners to increase the availability of suitable accommodation for young people leaving care.

Worcestershire Children First Business and Development plan

- Plan on a page to be presented

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

11 SEPTEMBER 2019

PERFORMANCE AND IN-YEAR BUDGET MONITORING

Summary

1. The Panel will be updated on performance and financial information for services relating to Children and Families.
2. Performance and financial information provides a further tool for the Scrutiny Panels in maintaining Members' understanding of services provided to the public, the effectiveness of current policies, and early knowledge of any issues or areas for further scrutiny.
3. The information provided relates to Quarter 1 (April - June 2019) split down by children's social care, education and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and financial information for the same period.
4. The intention is for the Scrutiny Panels to consider this information on a quarterly basis and then report by exception to the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board any suggestions for further scrutiny or areas of concern.
5. The Cabinet Members with Responsibility (CMR) for Children and Families, and Education and Skills have been invited to attend the meeting to respond to any queries from Panel Members.

Performance Information

6. The Corporate Balanced Scorecard is the means of understanding progress against the Council's Corporate Plan. The Scorecard contains a range of indicators linked to key priorities and themes. Many measures are long-term and may be affected by a wide range of factors, some of which are outside the direct control of the Council.
7. Attached at Appendix 1 is a dashboard of performance information which covers the indicators from the Directorate level scorecard and those from the corporate scorecard and other management information (as appropriate) which relate to services relevant to this Scrutiny Panel's remit.
8. The Corporate Balanced Scorecard for each Directorate is reported to Cabinet and is also available on the Council's website [here](#)

Financial Information

9. The revenue budget is currently predicting a £1.45m forecast overspend for 2019/20, mainly due to a £0.4m overspend in Placements and Provision partially mitigated by a £0.3m staffing underspend in other areas of Social Care, a £1m

overspend in Home to School and College Transport and a £0.3m pressure relating to the currently unachieved savings target relating to reduction in non-essential spend.

10. Based on information as at the end of Quarter 1 the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) budget is predicted to overspend by £6.5M due to pressures in the High Needs budget, particularly in out of county provision, and Post 16 provision. These pressures are in line with the known national picture, and other LAs, particularly County Councils, are facing similar pressures.

11. Further detail has been provided in the form of presentation slides, which can be found at Appendix 2.

Purpose of the Meeting

12. Following discussion of the information provided, the Scrutiny Panel is asked to determine:

- any comments to highlight to the CMR at the meeting and/or to Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board at its meeting on 30 September 2019
- whether any further information or scrutiny on a particular topic is required.

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – Children and Families Dashboard

Appendix 2 – In-year budget information

Contact Points

Specific Contact Points for this Report

Samantha Morris/Alyson Grice, Overview and Scrutiny Officers, Tel: 01905 844963/844962

Email: scrutiny@worcestershire.gov.uk

Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Head of Legal and Democratic Services) there are no background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

- Agendas and minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board on 24 January 2019, 28 March 2019 and 24 July 2019
- Agendas and minutes of the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 11 January 2019, 6 March 2019 and 17 July 2019

[All agendas and minutes are available on the Council's website here.](#)

ANALYSIS**Analysis - Children with a Education Health Care Plan**

All outstanding SEN statements were converted to EHCP plans by September 2018

Since January 2019 there has been an increase in 217 SEN/EHCP from 3511 to the current total of 3728, which represents an increase of 6.2%. In June the number of EHCPs increased by 48.

Since August 2018, there has been an 13.1% increase in the number of plans.

Analysis - New EHCP's

Historically the figures for August and September are combined into the September data. However, the exceptional increase in numbers has resulted in the figures for these months being separated. Since August 2018 we have had 629 requests. The total requests, since September 2014 is 2557, the total agreed to assessment for the same period is 1815. Agreement rate, for 2018 to 2019, is currently at 66%.

Analysis - Number of EHCP's completed

This quarter 150 EHCPs were completed, of which 77 met the 20 week statutory deadline. 51% of plans issued this quarter were done within the statutory 20 week deadline, which highlights a continuous trend in improvement in achieving the 20 week deadline.

Analysis - Number of students awaiting special school place

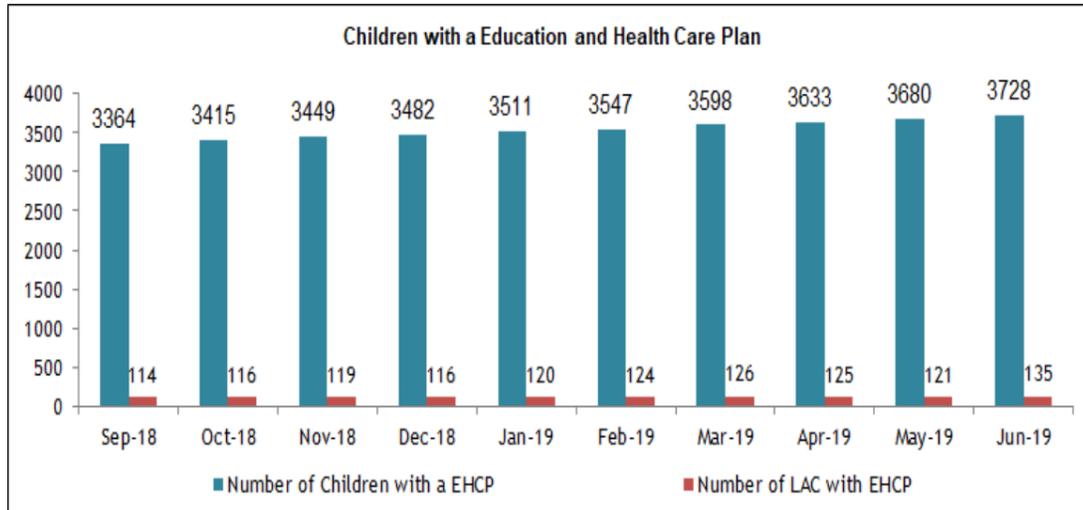
Total High Needs places are currently 1309. There are 78 June Placement consults. There are 64 children awaiting a place in total. A total of 58 children have been placed. Data was previously inaccurate for possible placements, as it has been noticed this criteria had been removed from the Special Schools Consultation spreadsheet. This has now been amended.

Analysis - Looked After Children with a EHCP - % with an up to date Health Assessment

There is a continued higher rate of HA being up to date at over 85% in Q1, last year was 67%.

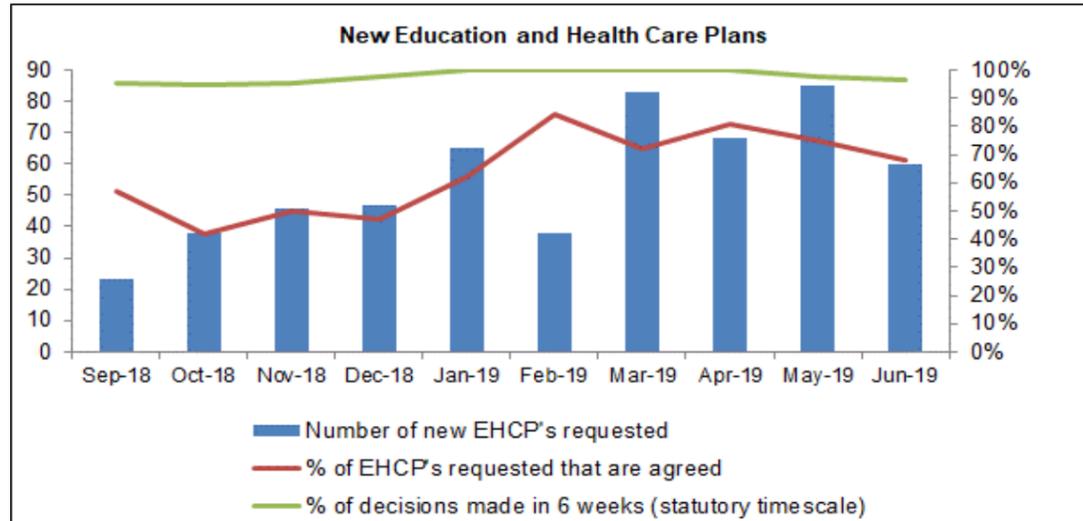
Analysis - Number of EHE pupils with SEND

The number of EHE children with a EHCP or SEN Support remains steady in 2018/19.



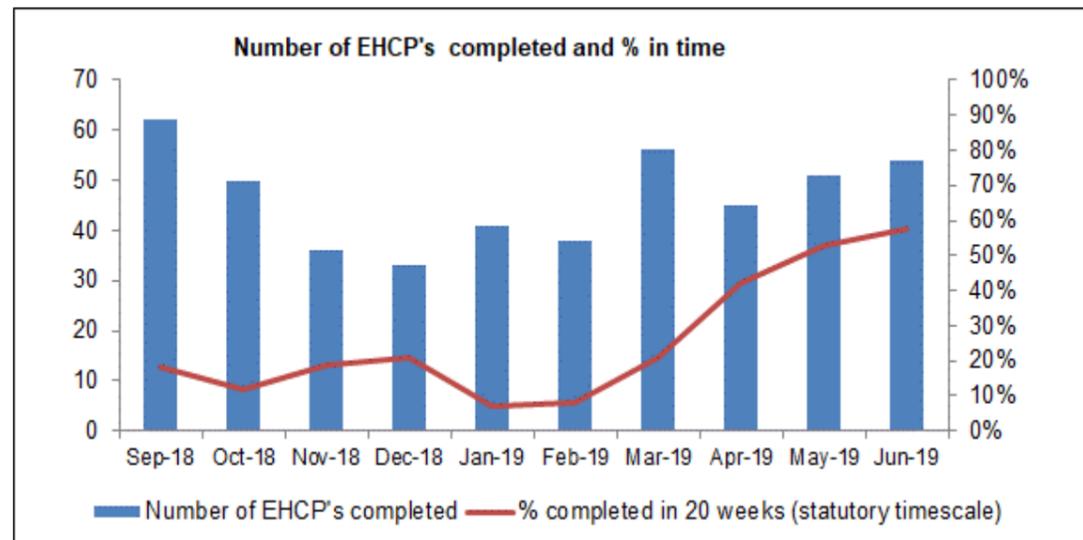
Children with a Education Health Care Plan (EHCP)

	Sep-16	Sep-17	Sep-18	Jan-19	Feb-19	Mar-19	Apr-19	May-19	Jun-19
Number with a EHCP	2614	2940	3364	3511	3547	3598	3633	3680	3728
Number Outstanding Statements	1136	499	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Looked After with EHCP	99	108	114	120	124	126	125	121	135



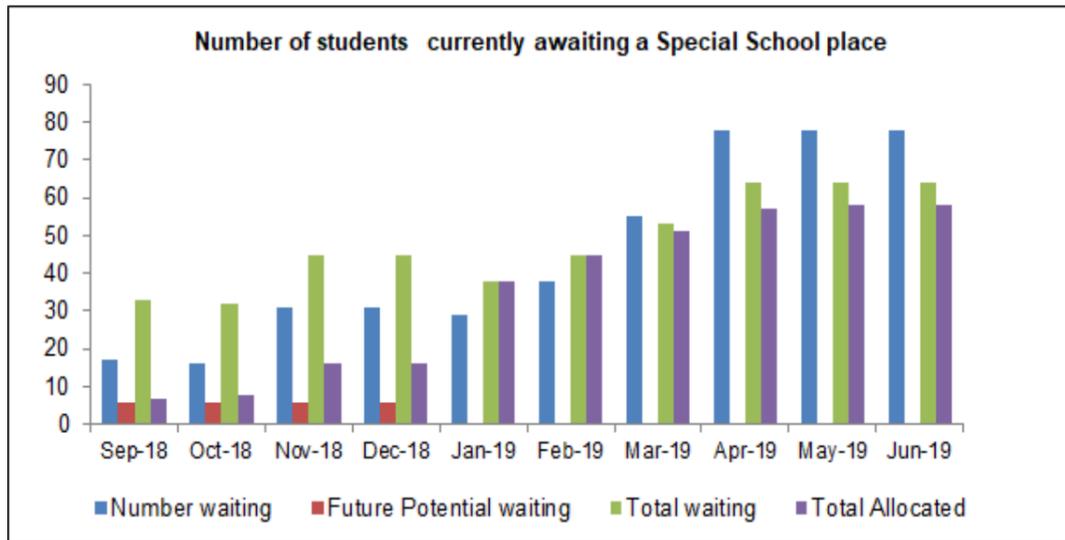
New Education and Health Care Plans

	Sep-16	Sep-17	Sep-18	Jan-19	Feb-19	Mar-19	Apr-19	May-19	Jun-19
Number Requested	518	685	23	65	38	83	69	85	60
% Requested that are agreed	74%	78%	57%	62%	84%	72%	81%	75%	68%
% Decisions made in 6 weeks	88%	96%	95%	100%	100%	100%	100%	98%	97%



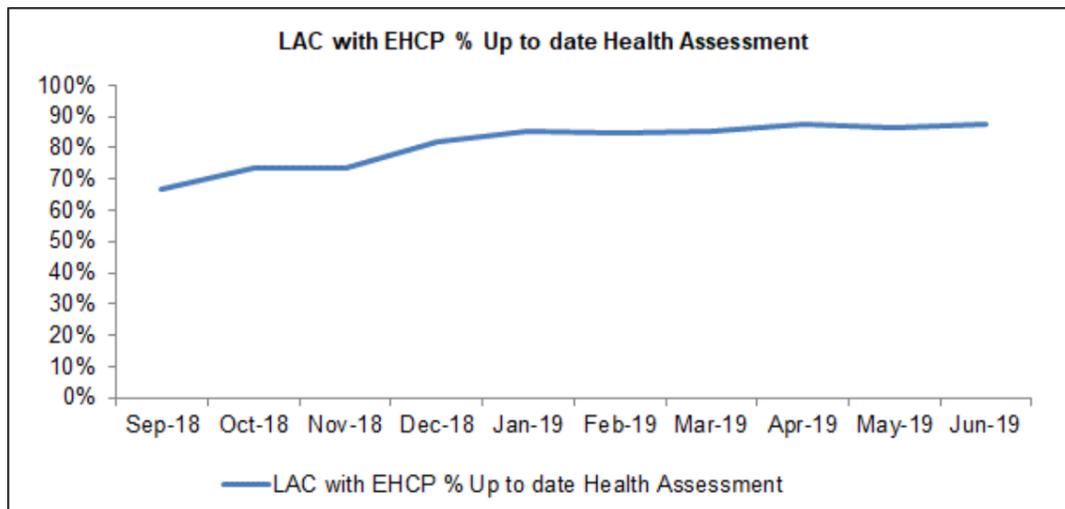
Number of EHCPs completed and % in time

	Sep-16	Sep-17	Sep-18	Jan-19	Feb-19	Mar-19	Apr-19	May-19	Jun-19
Number Completed	319	402	62	41	38	56	45	51	54
% in time	21%	14%	18%	7%	8%	21%	42%	53%	57%



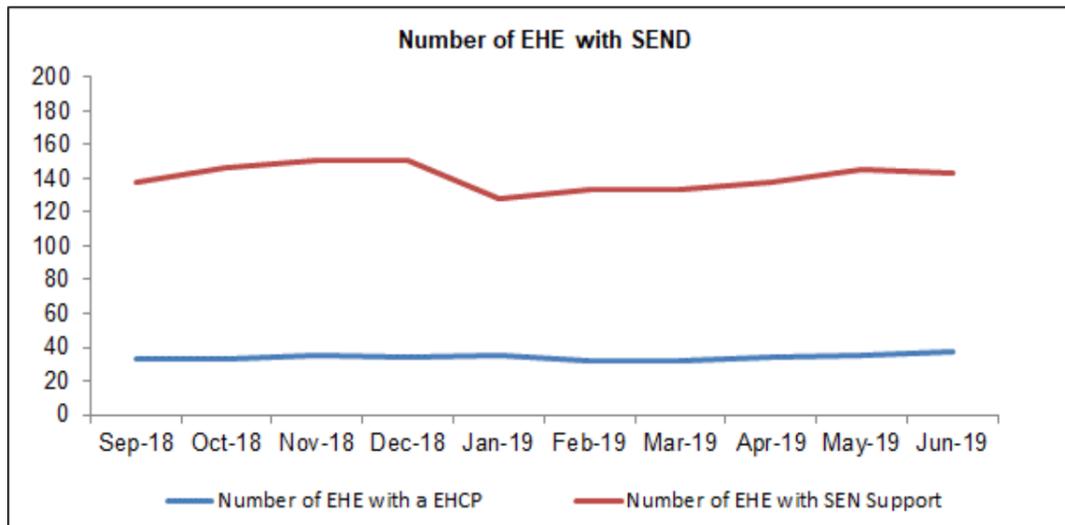
Number of students currently awaiting special school place

	Sep-16	Sep-17	Sep-18	Jan-19	Feb-19	Mar-19	Apr-19	May-19	Jun-19
Number waiting	n/a	26	17	29	38	55	78	78	78
Future Potential Waiting	n/a	10	6	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total waiting	n/a	46	33	38	45	53	64	64	64
Total Allocated	n/a	137	7	38	45	51	57	58	58



Looked After Children with a EHCP - % with up to date Health Assessment

	Sep-16	Sep-17	Sep-18	Jan-19	Feb-19	Mar-19	Apr-19	May-19	Jun-19
% up to date	n/a	68%	67%	85%	85%	85%	88%	86%	88%



Number of EHE pupils with SEND

	Sep-16	Sep-17	Sep-18	Jan-19	Feb-19	Mar-19	Apr-19	May-19	Jun-19
With EHCP	19	41	33	35	32	32	34	35	37
With SEN Support	38	94	138	128	133	133	138	145	143

ANALYSIS**Analysis - Ofsted Performance - % Good or Outstanding**

At the end of June 2019 84% of all schools within Worcestershire had a rating of good or outstanding. Whilst this level has remained throughout the year for Worcestershire there has been a national improvement in performance to 86%.

Ofsted inspection judgements from September 2018:

2 Inadequate

8 Requires Improvement

10 Good

2 Outstanding

Analysis - Ofsted Performance - Inadequate or Requiring Improvement Schools

The number of inadequate rated schools has reduced over the academic year.

In May 2019 North Bromsgrove High School was inspected as Requires Improvement having previously been inadequate

Analysis - School Attendance

Attendance has shown a slight deterioration throughout 2018/19 but remains very close to national levels that over a 3 year period has also deteriorated

Analysis - Missing Education

There are currently 36 Children registered as missing education, there remains a high level of outstanding missing enquiries, however there has been a reduction in latter months. Centralisation of the referrals to the Local Authority for effective monitoring and tracking with clear time frames for intervention is being introduced and the CME policy is being rewritten.

Electively home educated children continues to increase with 817 being a high peak as of June 2019. A new EHE form now has to be signed by school and parents if child is to be EHE to establish reason for EHE and promote responsibilities. Ongoing analysis of reasons for EHE continues.

With 115 permanent exclusions to the end of June 2019, it is forecast to be similar to last years total of 127 by September 2019 end.

Ofsted report found: "

Referrals (for CME) are acted on by leaders, and the majority of cases are appropriately closed. Leaders across different teams hold separate intelligence about some cases, and this is not aggregated into one system that allows professionals to understand all of a child's needs. The local authority effectively monitors the quality of alternative provision. Providers are offered appropriate challenge and support.

The number of children who are electively home educated is rising. A newly implemented system provides a better understanding of the reasons for this. Despite establishing a timescale within which to assess the suitability of home education, the local authority is not meeting its own target due to staff workload and capacity. Leaders prioritise assessments of the most vulnerable pupils and work effectively with partners to support children to re-integrate into schools where this is appropriate. "

Analysis - Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET - 16-18 years old)

September 2018 Peak - Due to the movement of young people to new education/training or employment places for September, there are a large number of unknowns that need to be tracked. Until these individuals are identified, the unknown figure remains high and is at its peak in September with a likely undercounting of NEET individuals as a result. These figures are expected by the DFE.

The team is working with stakeholders across the region to identify factors that underpin the NEETs position. These include the range of local options available for learners, poor engagement of learners, unmet mental health need, the quality of careers advice available, and trends for students dropping out of placements.

Analysis - Children Looked After

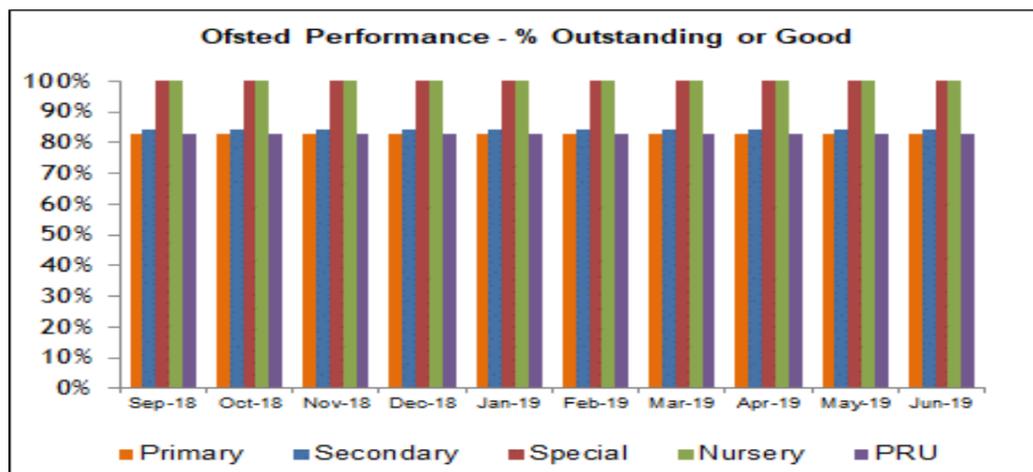
PEP completion rate for in county CLA has consistently been high at 97%. All pupils in Reception Year to Year 11 receive an on-site PEP visit from a PEP Coordinator once a year and a PEP phone consultation twice a year. There is a high rate of completion and an improving quality of information in the PEP document. All our current Y11 students have a destination Post 16. Local authorities have been made aware of Post 16's residing in their area who are NEET in order or the young person to access support in the LA they reside in.

The Special School PEP which was launched in September 2018 has been received well by schools and the progress and attainment section will be updated for September 2019. As a result there are more accurate and specific outcomes with information that can be actioned for children and young people.

Worcestershire out of county Post 16 PEPs are completed by social workers and quality assured by Babcock Virtual School. The completion rate still requires improvement and there are monthly meetings between the virtual school and social care to identify ways to improve this. Post 16 PEP will be reviewed to coincide with the young person's Pathway Plan. Virtual School have and will continue to offer training and guidance to Social Workers in accessing other Local Authorities' Local offer for Post 16, details of student bursary alongside their roles and responsibilities for Personal Education Plans and how to access support for their young people. NEET Panel has been set up where we meet on a monthly basis to discuss young people and how we can support them in their next stage of education or employment.

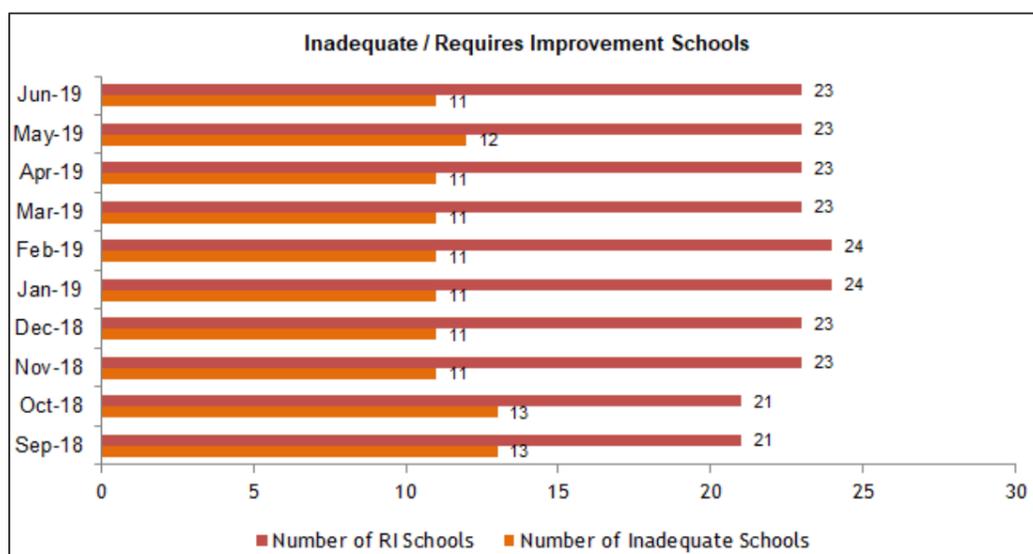
Welfare Call have introduced an Analytics programme and the main PEP has been revised for September 2019 to ensure that the Analytics data is accurate to provide more accurate information.

Ofsted report found "Children's progress is closely reviewed through personal education plans which have well-written targets, and this is an improvement since the last inspection. "



Ofsted Performance - % Good or Outstanding

	Sep-16	Sep-17	Sep-18	Oct-18	Jan-19	Feb-19	Mar-19	Apr-19	May-19	Jun-19
Primary	89%	88%	83%	83%	83%	83%	83%	83%	83%	83%
Secondary	93%	96%	84%	84%	84%	84%	84%	84%	84%	84%
Special	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Nursery	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
PRU	100%	83%	83%	83%	83%	83%	83%	83%	83%	83%
All Worcs. England	90%	90%	86%	84%	84%	84%	84%	84%	84%	84%
	89%	89%	84%	86%	85%	85%	85%	85%	85%	86%

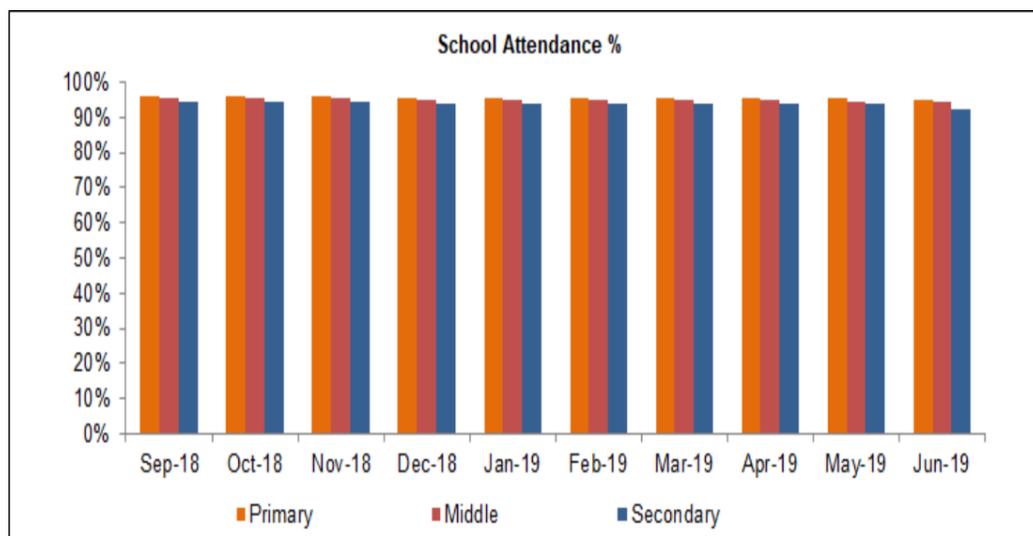


Inadequate Schools

- Eleven Inadequate schools in county
- St George's CofE First School (Redditch) 09/11/2016
 - St George's CofE Primary School and Nursery 26/01/2017
 - St John's CofE Primary School 10/02/2017
 - Badsey First School 16/02/2017
 - Newbridge Short Stay Secondary School 08/03/2017
 - Sidemoor First School and Nursery 24/05/2017
 - Burlish Park Primary School 13/07/2017
 - St Stephens CofE First School 05/10/2017
 - Northleigh CofE Primary School 15/11/2017
 - St Matthias C of E Primary School 07/06/2018
 - Upper Areley CofE VC Primary School 26/03/2019

Requires Improvement Schools

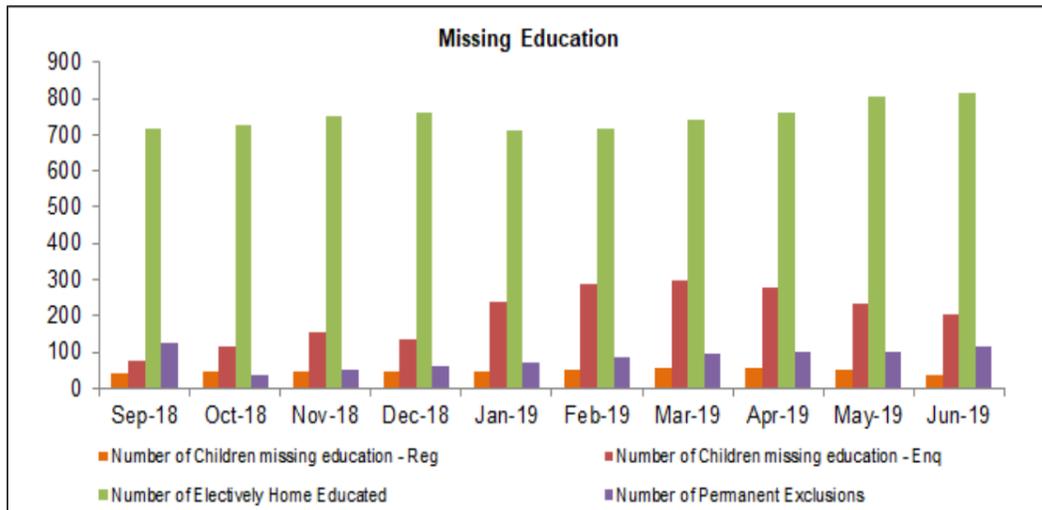
Twenty three Schools in county, of which 6 are secondary



School Attendance

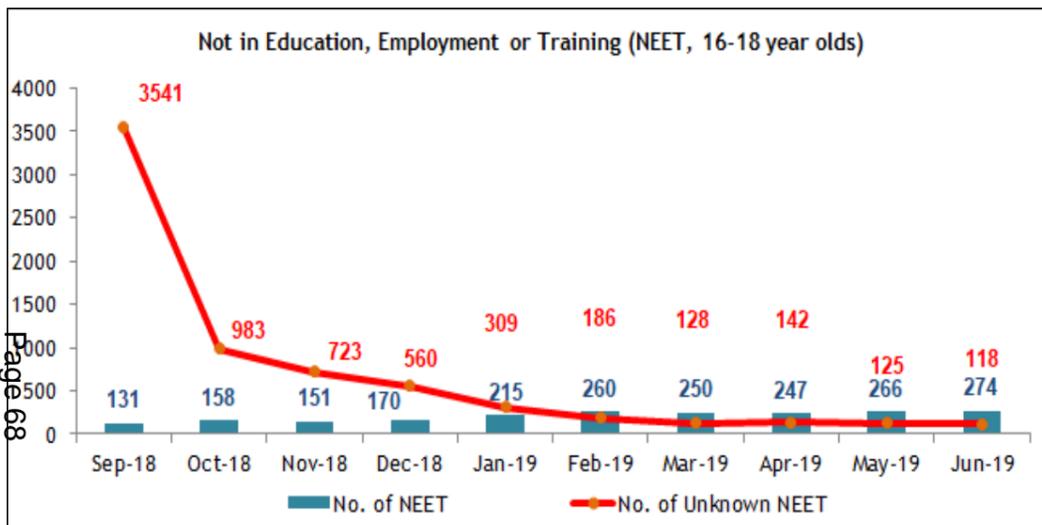
	Sep-16	Sep-17	Sep-18	Jan-19	Feb-19	Mar-19	Apr-19	May-19	Jun-19
Primary	96.1%	96.0%	96.0%	95.5%	95.5%	95.4%	95.4%	95.3%	95.2%
Middle	95.0%	94.4%	95.5%	95.0%	95.0%	94.9%	94.8%	94.7%	94.4%
Secondary	95.2%	95.1%	94.4%	94.1%	94.0%	94.0%	93.9%	93.7%	92.5%

National	Sep-16	Sep-17	Sep-18
Primary	96.0%	96.0%	95.8%
Secondary	94.8%	94.6%	94.5%



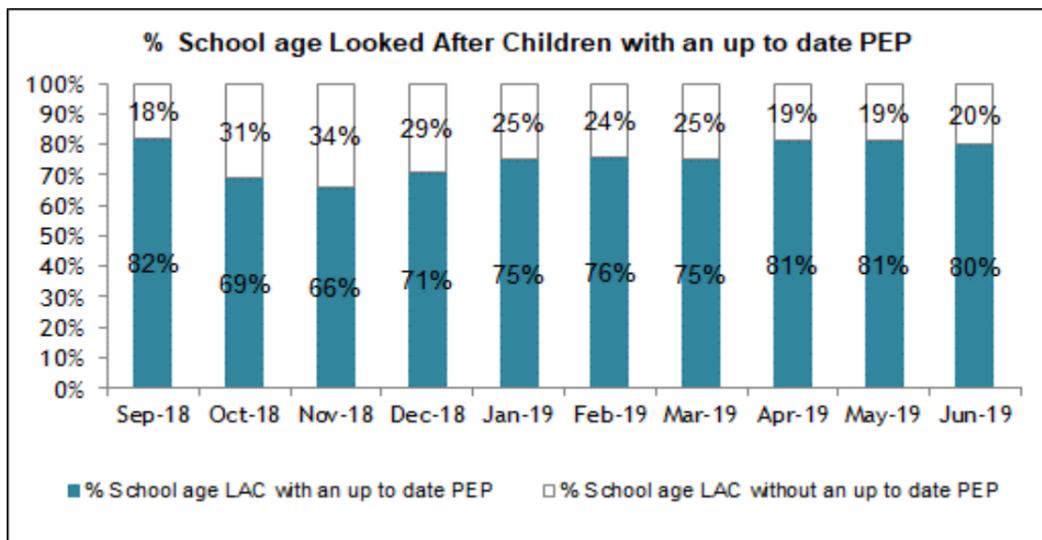
Missing Education

	Sep-16	Sep-17	Sep-18	Jan-19	Feb-19	Mar-19	Apr-19	May-19	Jun-19
Children Missing Education Registered	90	56	40	46	52	57	58	53	36
Children Missing Education Enquiries	n/a	n/a	78	237	289	298	278	232	205
Electively Home Educated	556	561	718	712	717	742	762	806	817
Permanent Exclusions (Cumulative)	106	140	127 (End of year figure)	73	85	96	100	100	115



Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET - 16 to 18 Year olds)

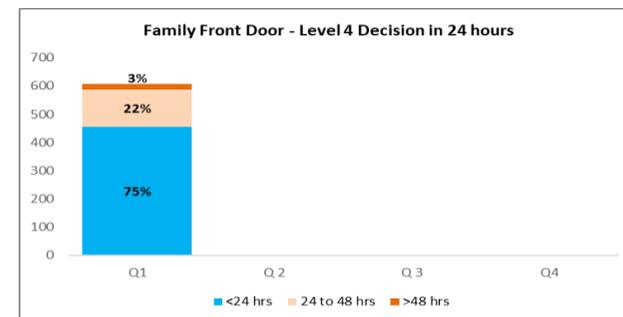
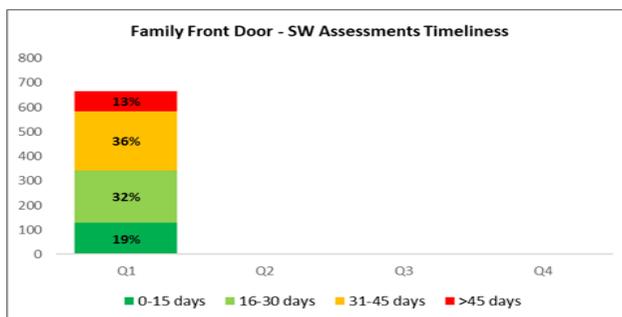
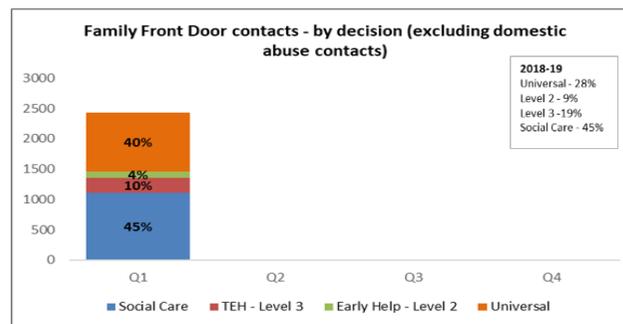
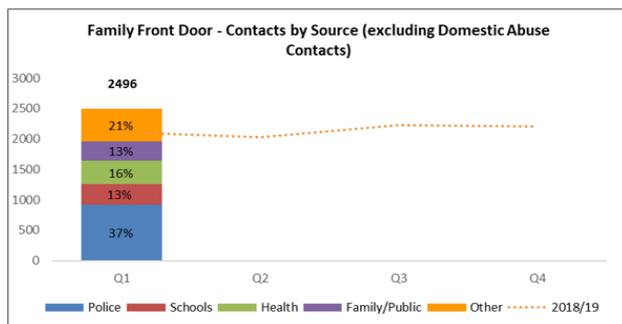
	Sep-16	Sep-17	Sep-18	Jan-19	Feb-19	Mar-19	Apr-19	May-19	Jun-19
Number of NEET	179	210	131	215	260	250	247	266	274
Number of Unknown NEET	n/a	n/a	3541	309	186	128	142	125	118



% School age Looked After Children with an up to date Personal Education Plan

	Sep-16	Sep-17	Sep-18	Jan-19	Feb-19	Mar-19	Apr-19	May-19	Jun-19
% Up to Date	87%	75%	82%	75%	76%	75%	81%	81%	80%
% Out of Date	13%	25%	18%	25%	24%	25%	19%	19%	20%

Family Front Door



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Analysis - Family Front Door

Rise in Demand and inappropriate application of threshold

May and June 19 saw a significant increase in contacts, from a previous average Jan. 19 - April 19 of 750 per month up to 821 and 920 respectively in May and June. Although agency source of contacts remain stable in % of agencies represented we have seen an increase in contacts resulting in the need for universal or level 2 services. This reflects partner agencies putting through inappropriate contacts when they should be directing these families to their own or local early help. The appropriateness of threshold decision making by managers at FFD is identified in the Ofsted report June 19 and this rise in inappropriate demand impacts negatively on FFD and assessment teams to work with children and families most in need and in a timely way and risks driving "process driven" practice as staff at FFD try to manage such demand with existing capacity.

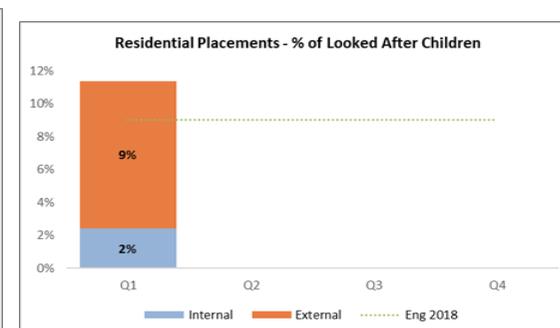
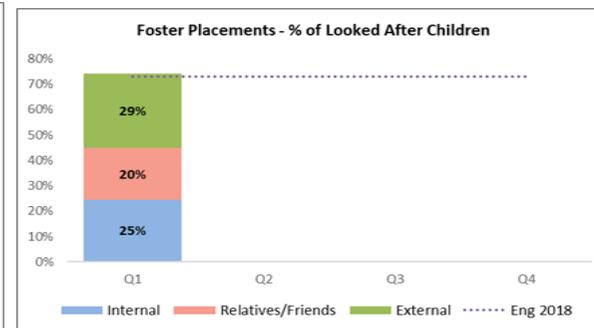
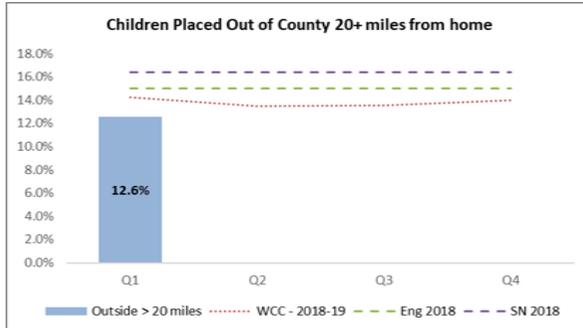
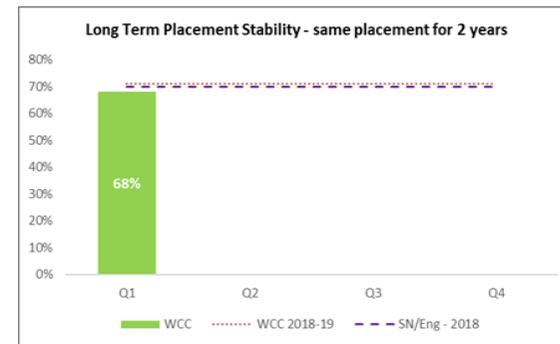
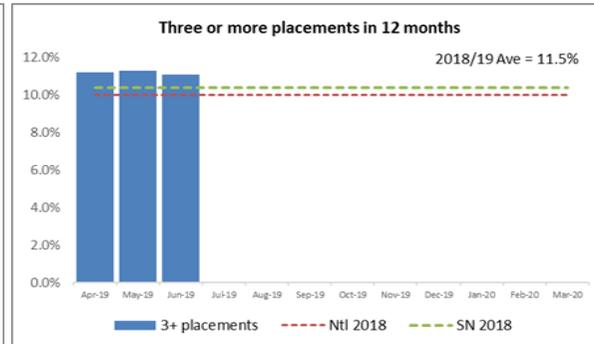
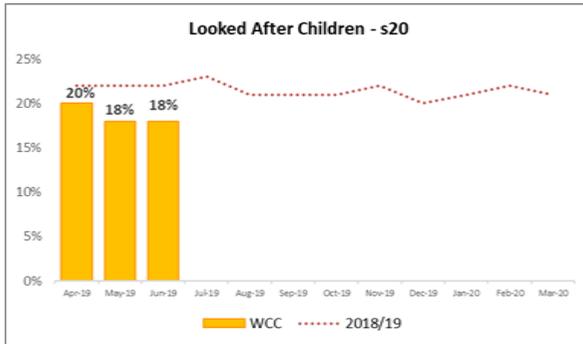
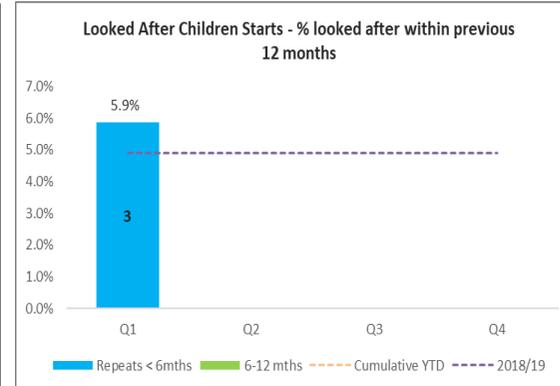
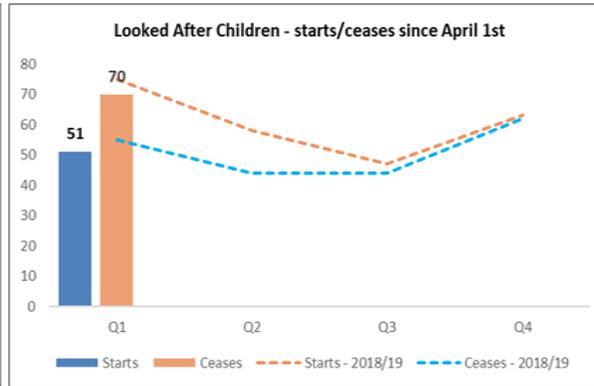
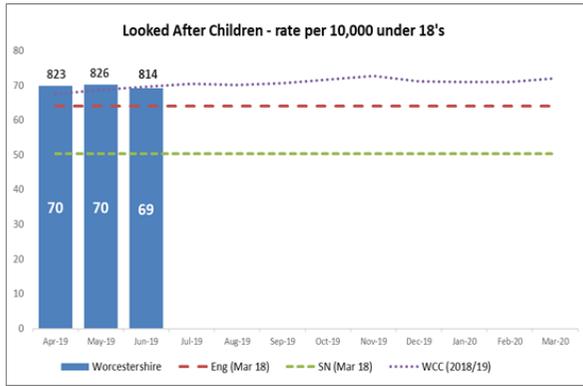
Health and Police have less than 50% of contacts resulting in level 4 need

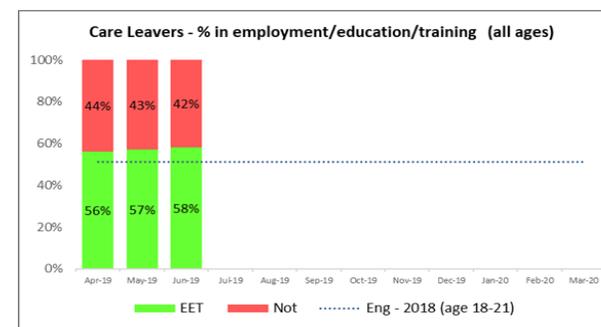
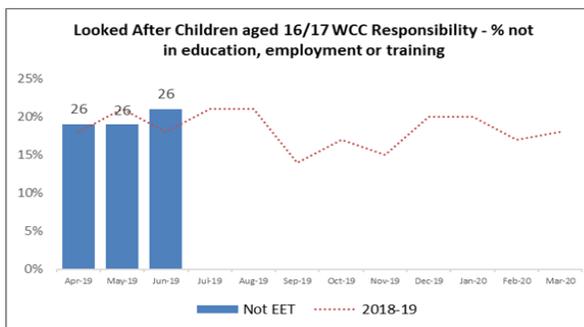
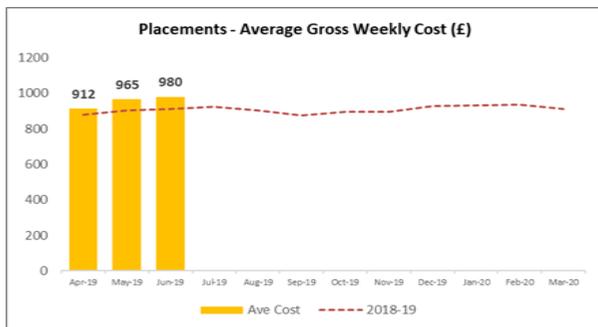
Data shows schools as having the highest % of contacts meeting appropriate threshold at level 4 at 77%, although whilst there is no national comparison data our target for this should still be higher at 85%. However Health agencies and Police show more inappropriate application of threshold with only 42% and 30% respectively of contacts resulting in a level 4 need. This data will be shared with Worcestershire Children's Safeguarding Partnership and the QAPP subgroup for additional audit to promote the professional debate on "wants/needs" for social work intervention and best practice for children and their families

Managerial Grip on timeliness

Despite the rise in demand for contacts and SWA, managerial grip on case work is good - this is reflected in the timeliness of decision making on contacts in 24hrs (at 75% up from an average of only 50% last year) and in the timeliness of SWA completed in 45 days (at 87% from an average of 81% in the previous year)

Through Care - Looked After Children and Care Leavers





No comparator data is available for this indicator

Care Leavers 18-21 in Employment, Education or Training as at 30 June 2019: **61%**. 2017/18 figure for Statistical Neighbours: **53.7%**

Analysis - Through Care

Numbers of Children in Care are reducing overall

Our Looked After Children numbers are showing signs of reduction as the longer standing cohort leave the care of the LA, permanency is achieved quickly for the younger new cohort and new accommodations are prevented, managing of risk and support in family care where it is safe to do so. The Edge of Care service, due to be operational November 19, will impact further supporting sustained reduction as the number leaving care out weigh those entering. Regional comparison at the end of 18/19 showed Worcestershire with the lowest number of new Looked After Children in the region.

Use of S20 Voluntary care continues to reduce

Care is used to protect children from harm when risks cannot be safely managed in the family care and our use of voluntary care under S20 continues to reduce from the 21% sustained in year 18/19 down to 18% in Qtr. 1

Case work with Looked After Children shows sustained good progress in:

- Care plans in place
- Visits to children in timescales
- Health Assessments in place
- Personal Education plans in place
- Timeliness of Looked After Children Reviews
- Care Leavers in EET at 61% are higher than Eng averages

However the number of Looked After Children aged 16/17yrs not in Education Employment or Training isn't sufficiently reducing. A NEET panel has been established to consider case by case with the virtual head and we will be monitoring impact.

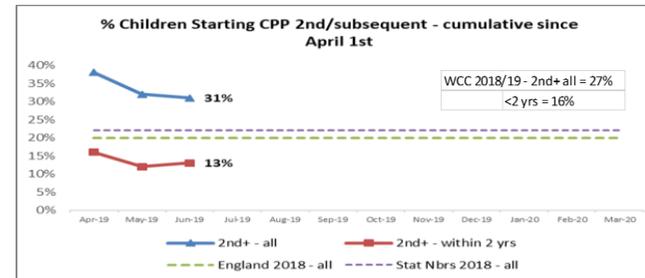
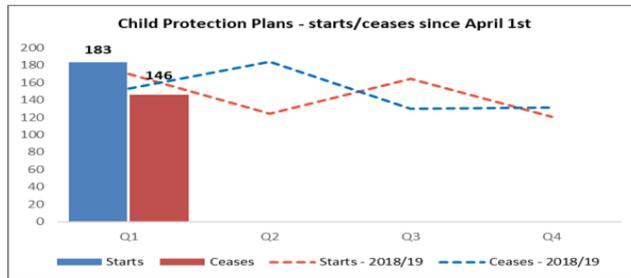
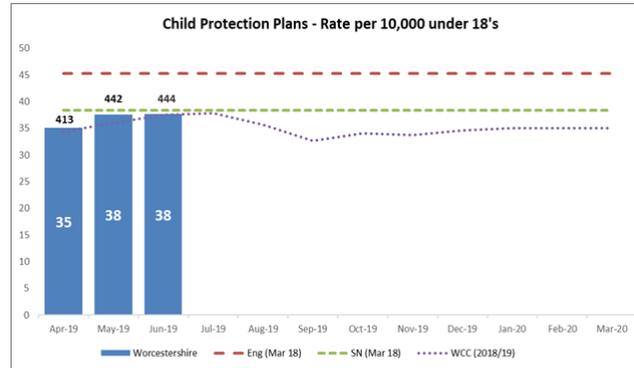
Placements for children in care are providing positive outcomes evidenced through KPI's in:

A reduction in children experiencing three or more placement moves
 Those children in long term stability (in the same placement for over 2years) in line with Eng. target
 A reduction, well below Eng./SN average, number of children placed over 20+ miles from home
 Care Leavers in suitable accommodation at 89% compared to the available comparison 17/18 SN / Eng. Average 84%

However:

- our use of B&B for care leavers (18yrs+) has been too high and an individual case review has been undertaken to identify reasons for use as well as making this data a monthly KPI for the snr management team - this will be reported into Corporate Parenting Board
- our use of residential care for 11% of our looked after children is above Eng. averages of 9% (note this is 17/18 data) We are awaiting more recent England averages data to make true comparison.

Child Protection



Analysis - Child Protection

Rise in Child Protection

Through 18/19 we saw a sustained average through year in number of children subject to CP at 35 per 10k (404 children March 19) However in year we have seen a rising trend month on month April - July - taking the over all number up to 480 at 31.7.19 (41 pre 10k) Whilst we expected a rise in conjunction with the reduction in newly accommodated children and work to manage risk in the family home, we did not expect to see such a dramatic rise. Two key issues have been identified;

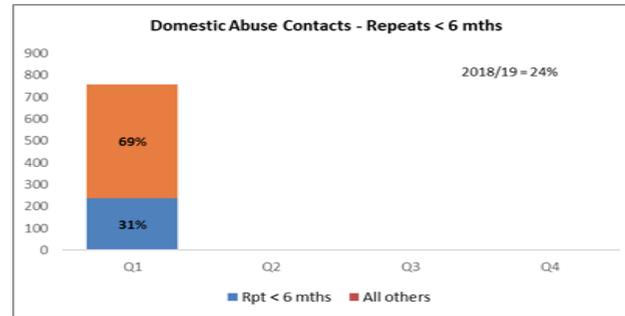
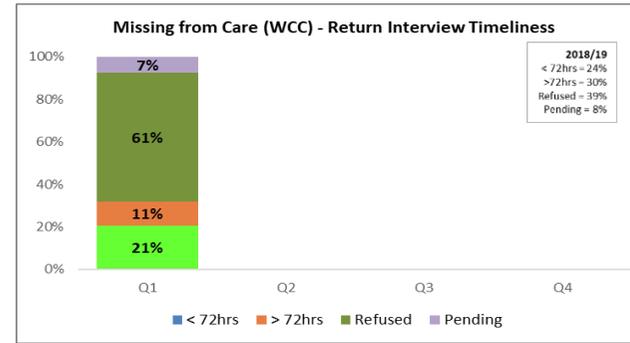
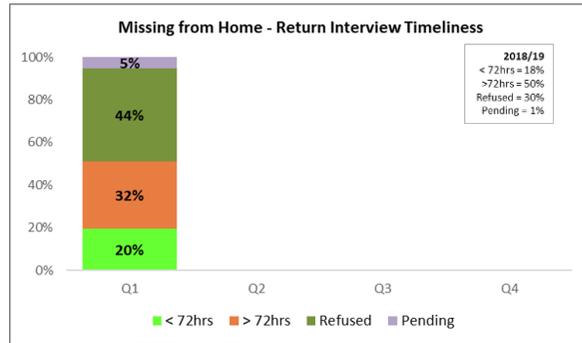
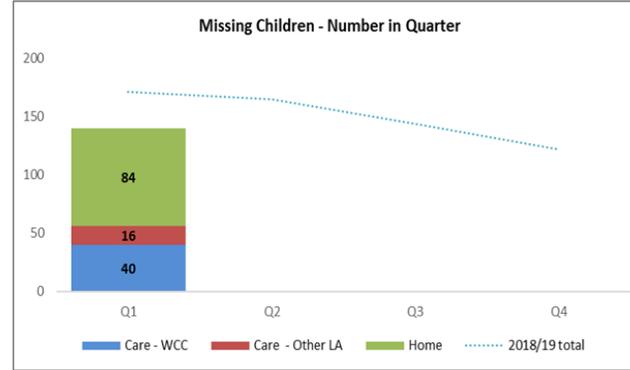
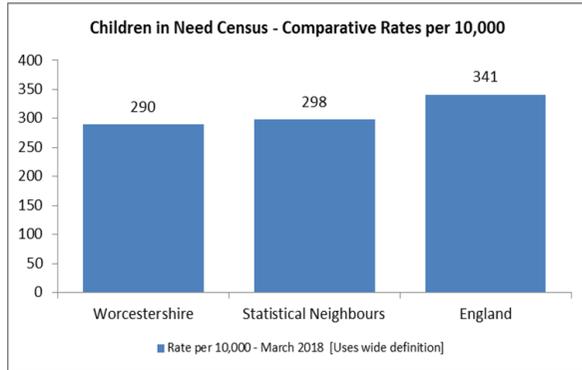
- one is the rise in the number of siblings groups of 3+ being presented with significant harm. There is an improvement in practice in recognising transferable risks, although we do need to ensure we are meeting threshold for individual children clearly
- the second is the high number of referrals (May/June (an average of 870 compared to the Jan - May average of 750) and new plans (May 19 an additional 29 children and then July 19 an additional 36 children) made in May and June that progressed to SWA and conference and CP plans. There is always a risk with such peaks in demand that front line work becomes "process driven" due to capacity and / or concern that referring agencies have not been acting on significant harm concerns in a timely way.

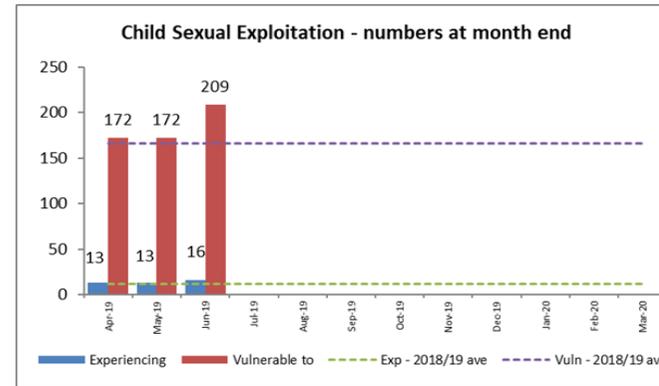
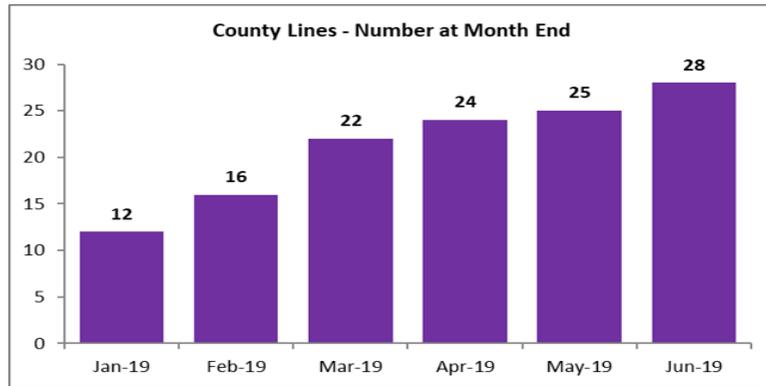
This is a concern for us to understand and audit is being undertaken to understand why there was such a high number of referrals in and to monitor outcome for this cohort to establish appropriate use of threshold.

Reduction in Repeats in less than 2 years

Repeat CP plans within 2 years has reduced from 16% 18/19 down to 13% in qtr. 1 of this year. This group of children is most reflective of current practice. We are still seeing children returning to CP plans with over a 2 year period gap since their last plan was in place. This is reflective of more historical practice. This cohort of children may have been removed inappropriately during a previous period of poor practice / decision making and includes those for whom circumstances did improve but have again deteriorated. We continue to be above the Eng. Av/SN in this category.

Children In Need





Analysis - Children in Need

Timely Management of Children In Need to achieve child centred outcomes

Children in Need are the third category of children open on plans to safeguarding - work is undertaken on a voluntary basis with parents seeking to prevent risk and need escalating to CP/Care. Timely and Focused management of plans without drift to achieve change has been a priority and we can evidence a reduction in CIN cases open for over 6mths from 16% Qtr. 4 of 18/19 down to 13% Qtr. 1 this year 19/20. The range of outcomes being NFA/CP and Care reflect good practice as the range of outcomes are used for individual children.

Get Safe is enabling us to identify children at risk of exploitation.

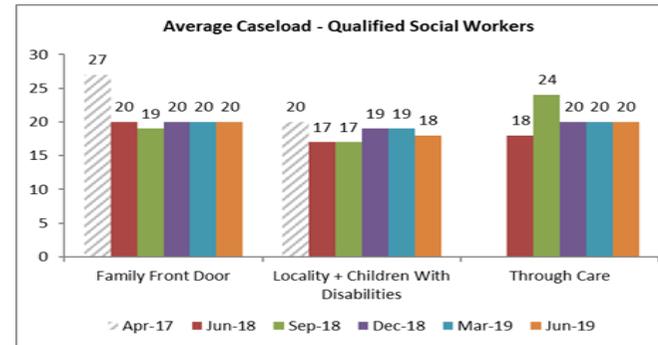
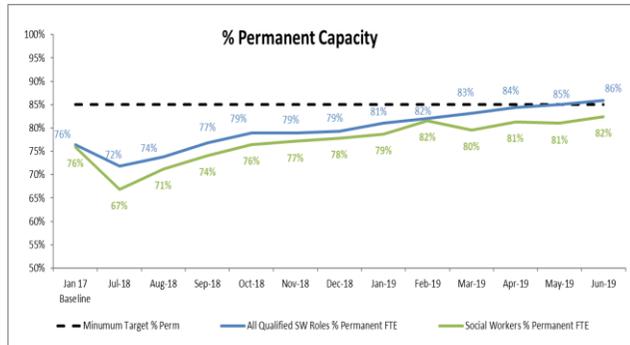
Increasing awareness internally and with partners, increased targeted capacity and improved data collation is enabling us to better identify children at risk of exploitation with CSE and County lines rising. These individual children are subject to plans and reviews through the Get Safe team.

Reduction in number of children involved in missing from Care and Home

We continue to see reducing number of children involved in incidents of being missing from home or care. Comparison with Qtr. 1 of 18/19 (seasonal comparison is relevant) show a significant decreased in children missing from home from 135 down to 84 and for those in care from 66 down to 40. However we have a high number of children refusing to undertake the welfare return interviews this quarter and this will be reviewed with the team

Repeat DA incidents within 6mths will be monitored against this base line

Staffing



Analysis - Staffing

Permanency in staffing continues to increase providing a better quality of practice and stability of worker for children

Case loads are stable and staff report they are manageable - although consistency for all staff isn't yet achieved

Next Staff Health Check is due October 19 results Dec 19

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Children and Families

11 September 2019

**Financial Update
Period 3 - 2019/20**

Period 3 Forecast– Children and Families Revenue

Dir.	Service	2019/20 Net Budget	2019/20 Forecast	19/20 Draft Variance Before Adj's	Transfer to Capital	Variance After Adj's	Variance After Adj's
		£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	%
CFC	CSC Safeguarding Locality Teams	12,886	12,687	(199)		(199)	-1.5%
CFC	CSC Through Care Locality based Hubs	4,580	4,526	(54)		(54)	-1.2%
CFC	CSC Family Front Door	5,049	5,043	(6)		(6)	-0.1%
CFC	CSC Targeted Family Support	1,664	1,664	0		0	0.0%
CFC	CSC Safeguarding and Quality Assurance	1,928	1,941	13		13	0.7%
CFC	CSC Placements & Provision	46,203	46,807	604	(210)	394	0.9%
CFC	Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board	168	253	85	(135)	(50)	-29.8%
CFC	Education & Skills	5,687	5,687	0		0	0.0%
CFC	Home to School & College Transport	14,419	15,419	1,000		1,000	6.9%
CFC	Early Help & Partnerships	5,323	5,351	28		28	0.5%
CFC	WCC Contribution to West Mercia Youth Offending Service	514	514	0		0	0.0%
CFC	Finance & Resources	971	1,800	829	(498)	331	34.1%
CFC	Children, Families and Communities (Excl DSG)	99,392	101,692	2,300	(843)	1,457	1.5%

Key Headlines – Children and Families Revenue

The revenue budget is predicting a £1.45M forecast overspend for 2019/20, mainly due to :

- £0.394M overspend in Placements and Provision. External placement numbers are higher than anticipated at budget setting, however this has been partially offset by underspends in internal placements
- £0.296M staffing underspend in other areas of Social Care which are small underspends in individual teams as vacancies are taking time to become filled
- £1.0M overspend in Home to School and College Transport
- £0.331M overspend in Finance & Resources as contributions towards a savings target for 'tailspend' (i.e. non-staffing expenditure) are being identified through the year.

Note that where appropriate, any expenditure relating to transformational work has been capitalised

Period 3 Forecast – Children and Families - DSG

- As at Period 3 (end of June) the forecast expenditure on Dedicated School Grant budgets is £220.7M – an overspend of £8.8M
- This is partially mitigated by the £2.3M additional grant allocation expected
- Net overspend on DSG budgets is forecast to be £6.5M for 2019/20

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Service	2019/20 Net Budget	2019/20 Forecast	19/20 Draft Variance Before Adj's	Proposed C/Fwds	Variance After Adj's	Variance After Adj's
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	%
DSG - School Formula Budgets	131,833	131,833	0		0	0.0%
DSG - High Needs Pupils	43,929	52,670	8,741	(8,741)	0	0.0%
DSG - Early Years	32,433	32,433	0		0	0.0%
DSG - Statutory Duties / Historic Commitments	3,213	3,228	15	(15)	0	0.0%
DSG - De-Delegated Services	580	580	0		0	0.0%
DSG - Sub Total	211,988	220,744	8,756	(8,756)	0	0.0%
DSG - Dedicated Schools Grant	(211,988)	(214,264)	(2,276)	2,276	0	0.0%
Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)	0	6,480	6,480	(6,480)	0	-

Key Headlines – Children and Families DSG

- DSG - overall a £6.5M overspend position due to pressures in High Needs budget, particularly in Out of County provision, and Post 16 provision
- Overspend would be 'carried forward', essentially increasing the deficit balance on the DSG reserve, which at some point needs to be paid back. The deficit balance at the start of the year was £0.633M
- Page 81 Worcestershire High Needs pressures are in line with known national picture, as other LAs, particularly County Councils, are facing similar pressures
- DfE recently confirmed that any authority that ends the year in a deficit of more than 1% of the gross DSG budget will need to submit a formal recovery proposal to the DfE. At the current forecast overspend, Worcestershire will pass the 1% threshold at the close of 2019/20

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CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

11 SEPTEMBER 2019

WORCESTERSHIRE CHILDREN FIRST

Summary

1. The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children and Families, the Director of Resources (WCF) and the Assistant Director of Communities and ADM Programme Management have been invited to the meeting to update the Panel on developments relating to Worcestershire Children First.

Background

2. In March 2018, Worcestershire County Council's (WCC) Cabinet agreed to the development of a wholly owned council company as the chosen delivery model to deliver children's social care. This decision was in direct response to the statutory direction published on 19 September 2017.

3. From April 2018, the programme entered the implementation phase and a detailed programme plan was developed. Decisions since then include Cabinet agreeing the name and legal form of the Company in July 2018 (the Company has been registered as Worcestershire Children First and a company limited by guarantee), along with the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families agreeing to extend the implementation programme and move the formal launch of Worcestershire Children First (WCF) to 1 October 2019.

4. In March 2019, Cabinet agreed formally to broaden the scope of services transferred to WCF to include education and early help services as well as children's social care. At this meeting, a refreshed Full Business Case was approved along with proposals to not extend the contract with Babcock Prime beyond October 2020 and transfer education services into Worcestershire Children First at the earliest opportunity.

5. On 5 September 2019 Cabinet will be asked to approve Company Board appointments and the Company's Interim Business Plan, and authorise the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Children's Commissioner, the Leader and CMRs for Children and Families, and Education and Skills, to take all appropriate steps on behalf of the Council in relation to the development of WCF and the commencement of its operation. The Cabinet report is attached as Appendix 1 and is available electronically [here](#).

Purpose of the Meeting

6. The Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel is asked to:

- Consider the update on the development of Worcestershire Children First;

- Agree whether it would wish to make any comments to the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children and Families.

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – [Cabinet Report 5 September 2019](#) Development of Worcestershire Children First including Appendix 1 Interim Business Plan

Contact Points for this Report

Phil Rook – Director of Resources WCF

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Hannah Needham – Assistant Director: ADM Programme and Communities

hneedham@worcestershire.gov.uk

Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Head of Legal and Democratic Services) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

- Agenda and Minutes of Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 23 November 2017, 25 January 2018, 22 March 2018, 16 November 2018, 29 January 2019 and 17 July 2019

[All agendas and minutes are available on the Council's website here.](#)

CABINET
5 SEPTEMBER 2019**DEVELOPMENT OF WORCESTERSHIRE CHILDREN FIRST**

Relevant Cabinet Members

Mr A C Roberts

Mr M J Hart

Relevant Officer

Chief Executive

Recommendation

1. **The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children and Families recommends that Cabinet:**
 - (a) **notes the progress made in developing Worcestershire Children First, and workstream update;**
 - (b) **approves the Company Board appointments and location of Worcestershire Children First;**
 - (c) **approves Worcestershire Children First's Interim Business Plan;**
 - (d) **authorises the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Department for Education appointed Children's Commissioner, Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Education and Skills and Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children and Families, to take all appropriate steps on behalf of the Council in relation to the development of Worcestershire Children First and the commencement of its operation, including agreeing the Service Delivery Contract, Articles of Association Service Support Agreement, and Governance Side Agreement; and**
 - (e) **approves the proposed contract sum for 2019/20 to Worcestershire Children First as set out in paragraph 28 and authorises the Chief Finance Officer to make the budget transfer to Worcestershire Children First accordingly, and notes the indicative contract sum for 2020/21 and 2021/22.**

Background

2. In March 2018, Cabinet agreed to the development of a Wholly-Owned Council Company as the chosen model to deliver and improve children's social care on behalf of Worcestershire County Council (the Council). This decision was in direct response to the statutory direction published on the 19 September 2017, with the Council agreeing to work in partnership with the Department for Education (DfE) on developing a Wholly Owned Council Company. The aim being at the point of transferring services into the Company, Services would be performing well, and the Company will have a positive

platform in which to sustain the progress and continue to improve outcomes for children and young people. This decision was informed by a full business case which followed the 'Five Case Model' contained within HM Treasury's guidance.

3. From April 2018, the programme entered the implementation phase and a detailed programme plan was developed. Decisions since then include Cabinet agreeing the name and legal form of the Company in July 2018 (the Company has been registered as Worcestershire Children First and as a company limited by guarantee); the set of Reserved Matters within the Article of Association in November 2018 along with the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Children and Families agreeing to extend the implementation programme and move the formal launch of Worcestershire Children First (WCF) to 1 October 2019.

4. As part of the implementation phase, thorough consideration was given to what is best for children and young people, with this work being carried out in context of the wider improvement agenda (e.g. special educational needs and/or disability (SEND) inspection and improvement plan) for Children's Services, the change in senior management structure of the Council and the current financial context of the Council.

5. This led to Cabinet, in March 2019, agreeing formally to voluntarily broaden the scope of services transferred to WCF to include wider aspects of Children's Services (e.g. education and early help services as well as social care). At this meeting, a refreshed Full Business Case was approved along with proposals to not extend the contract with Babcock Prime beyond October 2020 and transfer education services into WCF at the earliest opportunity.

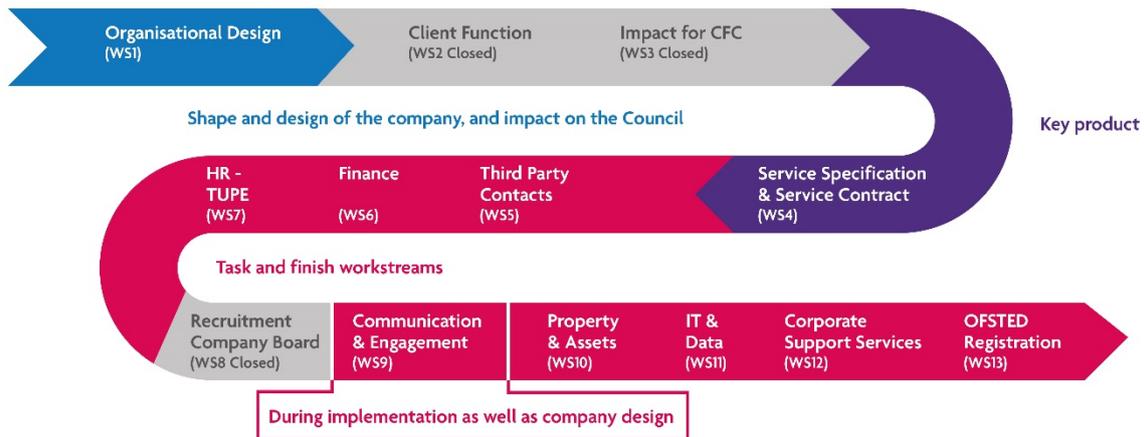
6. In June 2019, the Council's Children's Services were inspected by Ofsted. The judgement was published on the 29 July 2019 and were judged to be 'Requires Improvement to be Good'. Ofsted recognised that progress had been made in many areas of children's services in Worcestershire since the last inspection, when the local authority was judged to be inadequate in 2016. They stated that effective work by senior management and staff, together with commitment and investment by political leaders, has led to improved responses to the needs of children and families. As a result, outcomes for many children and their families are better, and there is evidence of a sustained trajectory of improvement.

7. This rate of improvement is a significant achievement for the Council and is testimony of the hard work and tenacity of the leadership team, managers and frontline staff, as well as the wider council and safeguarding partners. This now provides Worcestershire Children First with a positive platform to both sustain the progress and continue to deliver high quality services for children and young people in Worcestershire.

Programme update

8. Following confirmation of the increase to the scope of services that will transfer to WCF, work has been ongoing to ensure WCF is ready for go live from October 2019. The programme consists of 13 workstreams, of which 10 are still live. The diagram below lists the workstreams and key highlights of activity are outlined in the following paragraphs.

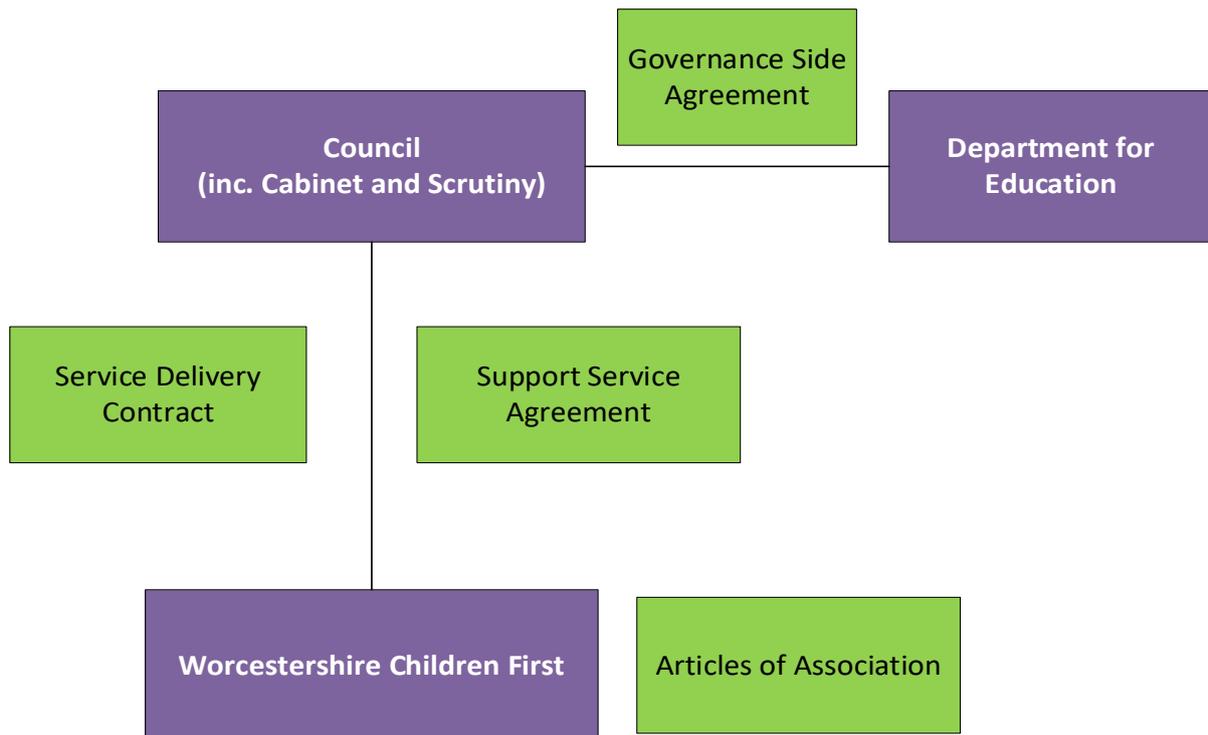
Workstreams



9. Activity within workstream 1 has focused on developing WCF's Interim Business Plan. This is a key document for WCF as it articulates its priorities and how it intends to improve outcomes for Worcestershire's children and young people and meet the Council's contractual expectations. Developing the Business Plan is a requirement the Council has set of the WCF within the Articles of Association. The Articles of Association outline what WCF are expected to include within the Plan and state that for the first Financial Year (the **Interim Business Plan**) shall be adopted by the Board on or around 1 October 2019 and continue until 31 March 2020 when it shall be replaced by the Business Plan for the subsequent Financial Year.

10. Whilst the Plan will be owned on a day to day basis by WCF, it will be approved by Cabinet on an annual basis in line with the agreed Reserved Matters. Other decisions relating to these Reserved Matters will be brought to Cabinet as and when appropriate. See paragraphs 23-37 for further detail on the Interim Business Plan and recommendations for approval.

11. Workstream 4 and workstream 12 focus on developing the contractual relationship between the Council and WCF. There are three contractual arrangements being developed which are depicted in the diagram below. Workstream 4 focuses on the service delivery contract (including the Articles of Association) and workstream 12 focuses on the support service arrangements provided by the Council to WCF.



12. The Service Delivery Contract is made up of a core terms document and 18 supporting schedules. Four of these schedules are considered the 'key pillars' of the contract. These are:-

- Service specification (schedule 2) – this confirms what the Council is expecting WCF to deliver on its behalf. It will outline the statutory functions and a brief 'outcome-focused' description of each service area. It doesn't describe how these services will be delivered as this will be decided by WCF as part of its operational independence from the Council
- Financial mechanism (schedule 5) – this describes how the Council will fund WCF including the approach to the jointly agreed financial management arrangements which includes the initial contract sum, invoicing, payments and financial reporting, VAT, management of any in year changes and the contract sum negotiation process to ensure alignment with the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan process
- Performance Framework (schedule 6) – this describes how the Council will be holding WCF to account for the services it is delegating to it. It includes as set of obligations on the Company which include the production of a Business Plan and the maintenance of several key performance indicators within an agreed tolerance level. The Performance Framework also describes the performance rectification process and confirms the expectations around contract monitoring
- Governance Schedule (schedule 18) – this describes the expectations of WCF in participating in the Council's democratic structure along with participating in the range of partnership meetings such as the Children's Strategic Partnership meeting. It also describes the contract monitoring meeting cycle in more detail. The contract monitoring will cover both the service delivery contract and the support service agreements.

13. The Service Delivery Contract also defines a range of activities provided by the Council (including the Support Services), that WCF is dependent on to deliver the services successfully. These are known as the Council Dependencies and they are listed within Schedule 4.

14. The Support Service Agreement consists of set of overarching core terms and 14 individual support service specifications ranging from HR, Property & Facilities Management, Finance and Project Management. These individual specifications describe the services to be provided by the Council to WCF along with the relevant financial information (e.g. the cost of the support services) and the relevant performance information.

15. The Governance Side Agreement is between the Council and the Department for Education and builds on the agreed Memorandum of Understanding and Statutory Direction. It is in place only whilst the Council remains under Direction.

16. Discussions relating to the detailed content of the contractual documentation are ongoing, but on track to be agreed by October 2019. Cabinet, in March 2019, authorised the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Department for Education appointed Children's Commissioner, Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Education and Skills and Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children and Families, to agree these final terms upon which services transfer to WCF. These terms also need to include the Governance Side Agreement and the Articles of Association.

17. As part of Workstream 7, consultation is taking place with staff who are in scope to TUPE transfer giving assurance that terms and conditions will not be negatively impacted because of the transfer. This engagement has included several well-attended briefing sessions, the offer of 1 to 1s and the distribution of formal 'measures' letters. Approximately 842 Full Time Equivalent staff will transfer into the Company at midnight on 1 October 2019, including qualifying employees working within a support service role as well.

18. Workstream 8 focused on the recruitment of the Company's board which is now complete. The following people have been appointed as Directors of WCF and Cabinet is asked to formally accept these appointments:

- Robin Morrison (Chairman) (DfE-appointed position)
- Catherine Driscoll (Chief Executive)
- Philip Rook (Director of Resources)
- Tina Russell (Director of Safeguarding and Social Care)
- Sarah Wilkins (Director of Education and Early Help)
- Cllr Karen May (Non-Executive Director)
- Cllr Marcus Hart (Non-Executive Director)
- Andrew Spice (Non-Executive Director)
- Sally Taylor (Non-Executive Director)
- Claire Burgess (Non-Executive Director)
- Gareth Moss (Non-Executive Director).

19. The WCF Board is now meeting in shadow form and approved the Interim Business Plan at their meeting on 20 August 2019. The WCF Board will be supported by two sub-boards: the Audit, Risk and Governance Board which will be chaired by Gareth Moss

and a Quality Assurance Board which will be chaired by Claire Burgess. The Quality Assurance Board will have a specific focus on the voice and experience of children and young people.

20. Since Cabinet in March 2019, County Hall has been confirmed as the location of the headquarters of WCF and work has commenced on refurbishing the relevant pavilions and scheduling the re-location of staff into the space. This, along with changes to emails and websites (covered in workstream 11), will be the biggest change experienced by staff because of the move into WCF. The website www.worcschildrenfirst.org.uk has been launched, as has the internal intranet site 'FirstSpace' which is already in use. All transferring staff will be issued within a new email name@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk and testing of these is on track for completion ahead of October 2019.

21. WCF will also operate, as the current service does, from several other offices and delivery points. Following legal advice, the Council is granting the WCF a Tenancy at Will to ensure the continuity of service from these buildings. These are currently being formalised ahead of October 2019.

22. The creation of WCF has also involved the direct registration of the fostering service, as Worcestershire Children First Fostering, and the change of registration of children's homes and short break units. Work with Ofsted is in progress to obtain these new registrations before the launch of Worcestershire Children First and the Council has fulfilled all the necessary expectations.

Worcestershire Children First - Interim Business Plan

23. As previously mentioned, the Council requires WCF to develop and publish a Business Plan. In the first Financial Year, it is expected that this will be an Interim Business Plan which shall be adopted in time for the launch of WCF and continue until 31 March 2020. This plan will be owned by WCF on a day to day basis and approved by Cabinet on an annual basis. The plan sets out WCF's vision and strategic goals for the next three-five years and outlines how they will deliver services for children, young people and families, on behalf of the Council, from 1 October 2019. It also describes WCF's staffing and governance structure as well as predictions and proposals in relation to finances. The full version of the Plan is available in the supporting information as an Appendix.

24. In response to the needs of the Council, WCF aims to improve outcomes for all children and young people (up to the age of 25) in Worcestershire, by addressing their needs holistically through excellent early help and prevention, education provision and social care. Its Vision, Mission, and Values define its reason for being. They are indicators of the direction of travel, to guide services and colleagues. This is particularly important for WCF as it represents positive change and new opportunities for colleagues and children, young people and families.

- **Vision:** Worcestershire to be a wonderful place for all children and young people to grow up
- **Mission:** Supporting children and young people to be happy, healthy and safe.
- **Values:** Children at our heart. Value family life. Good education for all. Protection from harm.

25. Taking into consideration the population and deprivation statistics of Worcestershire as well as the current service levels, the Plan provides details of WCF's strategic goals over the next five years. These goals are centred on four key areas of development

- Culture
- Organisation
- Users and Services
- Relationships.

26. Across these four areas, the Interim Business Plan outlines that, in the short term, WCF will focus on consolidating the significant progress in improvement that has already been achieved by continuing to build stable and productive teams, strengthening work with partners and establishing its brand. This will also include welcoming, through a TUPE transfer at the end of the current contract, colleagues from the current education provider – Babcock Prime - and embedding and maximising the new social care case management system to improve day to day practice. They will be also be testing the operational and contractual relationship with the Council to ensure both parties are working collectively together to improve outcomes for children and young people.

27. In the medium to longer term the Plan sets out that WCF will increase its efforts to co-produce with service users and have a relentless focus on delivering good quality, impactful, services. They intend to exploit opportunities that will help deliver its vision and mission and aim to work effectively and efficiently within an agreed financial envelope. WCF also aims to have national recognition for the quality of services it provides and the positive impact it makes to children and young people's lives.

28. Within the financial section of the Interim Business Plan the detail outlines the proposed contract sum which is shown as three separate elements. These elements and their proposed values for the contract period are shown below.

	2019/20 6 months	Indicative 2020/21 Full Year
	£000	£000
Current Service Budgets (Gross)	51,554	107,453
Additional Costs of Company	402	695
Support Services (Transfer/buy-back)	3,221	6,455
Total Gross Cost	55,177	114,603

29. The 2019/20, gross cost is in line with the budget set by Council in February 2019. The future year budget is indicative at this stage as the Council is currently reviewing its medium term financial plan and awaiting funding announcements. As such the £107.453m is reflective of the demand and cost pressures forecast at this stage. Further review of this and other elements will take place between now and January 2020 when the WCF Board and then Full Council will further consider this matter. As part of that exercise the Council will review Government announcements on external funding and the transfers necessary that will be reflected in the net budget of WCF.

30. The documentation requires that should any additional funding in-year be sought, it is to be requested by WCF (either Capital or Revenue) through the governance schedules. These provisions require WCF to complete a business case that will be discussed with the Council and considered in accordance with the Council's decision-making process. If agreed (as appropriate) this would be reflected through a change control process.

31. The Council is currently reviewing the current set-up costs of WCF and the ability to transfer these to WCF to hold against any potential future tax liabilities. As such this would be recognised as a technical loss on day one, but would be held against future Council reserves if no offset can be made. This will be noted in the first annual accounts for WCF.

32. WCF has already established sound financial controls, bank account, VAT registration and its PAYE reference. Internal Audit will be provided from the Council's internal function and reported to both WCF and Council's Audit Committees.

33. The delivery of services through WCF will necessitate the creation of additional management posts within WCF that could not be transferred from existing posts in the Council. In addition, there are some non-staffing cost increases to consider, specifically the ongoing legal and audit requirements of the Company.

34. The Support Services figure includes the costs of services, covered by Support Service Agreements (SSA), which has been agreed through dialogue meetings. The basis of charge is based on 2019/20 budget and appropriate relevant service metrics to establish the service price.

35. The assumption is the cost of the Babcock Prime contract is not currently included in the WCF budget at this point, but this will be built into the 3-year budget once there is greater clarity of services transferring to WCF and timescale.

36. Achieving these ambitious aims for WCF's long-term future will be dependent on several internal and external factors, meaning they will be subject to change as the needs of the Council changes and WCF matures. Therefore, in line with Council expectations, the Interim Business Plan and WCF's budget will be reviewed and refreshed on an annual basis alongside the Council's annual review of its own medium-term financial plan and budget setting process.

37. Given the early stages of WCF's developments and the time of approval being close to the publication of the recent ILACS inspection report, the content of this Interim Business Plan meets the requirements of the Council. However, it is expected within its next iteration that it will include the necessary response to recent Ofsted ILACS inspection, and a comprehensive cash-flow forecast and balance sheet. It is also expected that a more detailed procurement and commissioning plan will be available. The plan will be available in an easy read version. Nevertheless, it is recommended that Cabinet approve this Interim Business Plan as adopted by WCF's Board on 20 August 2019

Legal, Financial and HR Implications

38. The paragraphs above outline the legal/contractual arrangements that will be in place between the Council and WCF. The term of the contract is an initial five years with the option to extend by a further five years.

39. WCF's Interim Business Plan provides detail around the financial and staffing expectations. Approximately 842 staff will transfer from the Council to WCF at midnight on 1 October 2019 along with £55.177m for the remainder of 2019/20. This is in line with the Council approved budget set at Full Council in February 2019.

40. Budget monitoring and reporting will continue to be carried out and reported through quarterly overall Council budget forecasts to Cabinet. Any variations or change orders arising in a change to the contract value would be report or approved through that forum dependent on the scheme of delegation.

41. In development of the financial model and as part of the development of the 3-5-year business plan for WCF, a detailed review, analysis, challenge and scrutiny has been completed by finance staff and operational staff within the council. A review has also been undertaken by both the Chief Financial Officer and the Director of Resources (Designate) for WCF. Both parties have also sought an independent review and assurance of the budget development process from Mutual Ventures (MV) in a critical friend role. Mutual Ventures concluded that they are assured that the development of WCF's budget has followed a robust process and includes the scope of analysis and information necessary for WCF and the Council to reach agreement on an appropriate budget for WCF. However, they also concluded that it was not within the scope of MV's remit to validate or provide an independent review and endorsement of the sufficiency of the WCF budget calculated by WCF and the Council.

42. All future year figures at this stage are indicative and no decisions have been taken. The Interim Business Plan for WCF and its medium-term financial plan will be considered alongside the annual budget setting cycle and be presented to Full Council alongside the Council Tax precept decision in February 2020.

Equality and Diversity Implications, Privacy and Public Health Impact Assessments

43. The Council must, during planning, decision-making and implementation, exercise a proportionate level of due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

44. An Equality Relevance Screening has been carried out in respect of these recommendations. It identified that further equality impact analysis and public health impact assessments will be required in respect of staff, service users and the wider community during design and implementation of activity needed to give effect to the recommendations set out in this report.

45. The services and functions being transferred into WCF have the duty to improve outcomes for children and young people, and these outcomes directly or indirectly impact on their health. The Public Health Ring-fenced Grant is being used to support some of these services, specifically some Early Help services, in this context. A full Public Health Impact review will be carried out on services, including evaluation of impact and effectiveness.

Risk Implications

46. WCF's Interim Business Plan outlines, within its appendices, an overview of the significant risk that WCF will be managing on a day to day basis. These risks will also form part of the Council's high-level risk register as the Council remains accountable.

Supporting Information

- Appendix - WCF Interim Business Plan (electronic version only)

Contact Points

County Council Contact Points

County Council: 01905 763763

Specific Contact Points for this report

Hannah Needham, Assistant Director ADM Programme and Communities

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Chief Executive) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

Agenda papers for the meetings of the Cabinet held on 29 March 2018, 12 July 2018, 15 November 2018 and 14 March 2019.

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

11 SEPTEMBER 2019

WORK PROGRAMME 2018/19

Summary

1. From time to time the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel will review its work programme and consider which issues should be investigated as a priority.

Background

2. Worcestershire County Council has a rolling annual Work Programme for Overview and Scrutiny. The 2018/19 Work Programme has been developed by taking into account issues still to be completed from 2017/18, the views of Overview and Scrutiny Panel Members and the findings of the budget scrutiny process.

3. Suggested issues have been prioritised using scrutiny feasibility criteria in order to ensure that topics are selected subjectively and the 'added value' of a review is considered right from the beginning.

4. The Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel is responsible for scrutiny of:

- Children's Social Care and Families
- Public Health relating to Families
- Education and Skills

5. The current Work Programme was agreed by Council on 8 November 2018 and the refreshed Work Programme for 2019/20 will be considered by Council on 12 September 2019.

Dates of Future Meetings

- 25 September 2019 at 10am
- 21 October 2019 at 2pm
- 13 November 2019 at 10am

Purpose of the Meeting

6. The Panel may like to consider the 2018/19 Work Programme and consider whether it would wish to make any amendments. The Panel will wish to retain the flexibility to take into account any urgent issues which may arise.

Supporting Information

- Appendix 1 – Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel Work Programme 2018/19

Contact Points

Specific Contact Points for this Report

Samantha Morris/Alyson Grice, Overview and Scrutiny Officers, Tel: 01905 844963/844962

Email: scrutiny@worcestershire.gov.uk

Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Head of Legal and Democratic Services) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

- Agenda and minutes of Council on 8 November 2018 – available on the Council website [here](#)
- Agenda and Minutes of OSPB on 24 July 2019 - available on the Council website [here](#)

2018/19 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME: Children & Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel

The main focus of the Panel's work will be the follow up from the Ofsted inspection report and the implementation of the Service Improvement Plan, and the development of Worcestershire Children First (WCF) the Alternative Delivery Model.

Updates on the Service Improvement Plan and Ofsted monitoring visits to include consideration of the workload of social workers (including travel time and key workers) and consideration of comparative figures in relation to performance of agency staff, recruitment and retention and caseloads.

Date of Meeting	Issue for Scrutiny	Date of Last Report	Notes/Follow-up Action
11 September 2019	Update on Worcestershire Children First - Review the service delivery contract/ business plan	23 November 2017 25 January 2018 22 March 2018 16 November 2018 29 January 2019 17 July 2019	
11 September 2019	Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report	13 September 2017 14 September 2018	
11 September 2019	Performance and In-Year Budget Monitoring Quarter 1 (April-June)	17 July 2019	
11 September 2019	Outcomes of Ofsted ILACS Inspection		Ofsted report published 29 July 2019

25 September 2019	Overnight Unit-based Short Breaks for Children with Disabilities – ongoing Scrutiny	8 August 2018 4 June 2019	An in-depth Scrutiny was also carried out and reported to the OSPB on 26 April 2018 Results of consultation going to Cabinet on 26 September 2019
25 September 2019	Update on the Assessment Pathway for Children and Young People who may have Autism – business case		Referred from OSPB 25 May 2019
25 September 2019	Optimising the Use of Children's Centre Buildings in the Context of Effective Prevention Services for Children and Young People	7 February 2018 14 September 2018	Going to Cabinet 26 September
21 October 2019	Development of Edge of Care Services	11 January 2019	Suggested during the Budget discussion Jan 2019
13 November 2019	School Organisation Plan (2019-24)	N/A Plan was circulated to the Panel February 2019	The Plan was agreed by Cabinet on 13 December 2018 and will be refreshed in December 2019
13 November 2019	SEND Improvement Plan	6 March 2019	Following Ofsted Monitoring visits in July and October
13 November 2019	Budget Scrutiny	16 November 2018 14 January 2018	
13 November 2019	Performance Monitoring Quarter 2 (June-Sept)		
January 2020	Budget Scrutiny		

February/March 2020	Performance and In-Year Budget Monitoring Quarter 3 (October – December)		
June/July 2020	Performance and In-Year Budget Monitoring Quarter 4 (January - March)		
Possible Future Items			
TBC November 2019 (?)	Educational Outcomes for children and young people educated in Worcestershire schools for 2019	7 February 2018	
TBC	New Model of Delivery for Medical Education Provision		
TBC	Update on the Children's Social Care Service Improvement Plan – Ofsted Monitoring Visit Feedback	14 August 2017 24 October 2017 22 March 2018 16 May 2018 14 September 2018 16 November 2018 6 March 2019	See above: Outcomes of Ofsted ILACS inspection
TBC	Sufficiency work including private residential provision used by the council (as suggested by CD) To include placements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> types of placements in Worcestershire emergency placements 	11 January 2019	Suggested by the Director of Children, Families and Communities during the Performance Monitoring discussion To be considered early 2020

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • costs • availability 		
TBC	Commissioning a 0-19 Prevention and Early Intervention Service for Children and Young People	11 January 2019 10 May 2019	Update on progress when commissioning process is complete
TBC	Children who are educated 'otherwise' (including elective home education and alternative provision)	10 May 2019	Update on progress in due course/scrutiny task group to be set up Autumn 2019
TBC	School Attainment at KS2 2019	9 October 2018 7 February 2018 17 July 2019	Progress actions from 9 October 2018 meeting with Schools 2019 validated data to be shared with the Panel when available
Standing Items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance and In-year Budget Monitoring • Quality Assurance • Safeguarding • Budget Scrutiny Process 	TBC	
Scrutiny Champions	Safeguarding – Cllr Tom Baker-Price Education – Cllr Fran Oborski Looked After Children - Cllr Jane Potter Finance/budget – Cllr Pat Agar		